



Division BS1235

Section .J77

No.

PRIMEVAL REVELATION

The "Davies Lecture" for 1896

PRIMEVAL REVELATION

STUDIES IN GENESIS I.—VIII.

BY

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NEW YORK
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY

10, EAST 23RD STREET

1897

EXTRACT FROM THE TRUST DEED
OF THE "DAVIES LECTURE"

THOMAS DAVIES, of Bootle, near Liverpool, being deeply interested in the success and prosperity of the religious denomination known as

THE WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODISTS,

and being actuated by a desire to perpetuate the memory of his late father,

DAVID DAVIES,

who was for many years a faithful and consistent member of the said denomination, lately resolved to found and endow a Lectureship to be called

THE DAVIES LECTURE,

in connection with the said denomination; and for that purpose, in June, 1893, paid to Trustees, appointed by the General Assembly, the sum of £2,000, to produce annually the sum of £50.

The Lecturer shall be a fully ordained Minister of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.

The subject of the Lecture shall be RELIGION.

The Lecturer shall be allowed considerable latitude in the treatment of the subject.

While special attention should be given to the Christian Religion, it is not intended to exclude the subject of other religions.

Such topics as the following may be taken up by successive Lecturers :

The Definition of Religion.

The Origin, Growth, and Development, together with the Universality of Religion.

The Philosophy of Religion.

The Science of Comparative Religion.

The Jewish Religion in its various Stages.

The Christian Religion in its Developments and Corruptions, in its Doctrines and Practices.

The Relation of Science to Religion.

The Relation of Morality to Religion.

All topics fairly connected with Religion in any of its aspects, whether Theological, Philosophical, or Historical.

The Lectures shall be delivered in each year during the sittings of the General Assembly of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, at one of their Chapels in the place or town where such sittings shall be held, and on some evening before the day devoted by the said assembly to preaching; and the Moderator of the Assembly, or in his absence the Acting Moderator, shall preside at the meeting at which the Lecture shall be delivered.

Each Lecturer must, within twelve calendar months after delivering his Lecture, publish it at his own expense in crown 8vo, the Lecture to take not less than 150 pages; and to be preceded by extracts from this Deed, explaining the foundation and purpose of the Lecture.

P R E F A C E

I N thinking of a suitable subject for the Davies Lecture for 1896, my mind gravitated to "Mosaic Theology" as being both timely and fruitful. Materials accumulated beyond my expectation, till at last I found myself under the necessity of dividing the work into three parts—Primeval Revelation, Patriarchal Revelation, and the Sinaitic Revelation. The first only is presented in this volume, and is complete in itself.

Many efforts have recently been made to reduce the first chapters of Genesis into myths, and to reconstruct human history on the supposition that man began his career as a savage. In this volume the attempt is made to interpret these chapters on the traditional hypothesis that the Bible account is historically trustworthy, and that therefore mankind began their course, not in a state of barbarism, but in a stage of civilisation, under the spiritual guidance of the Creator.

Under the stress of the evolution theory, theologians of repute are endeavouring to get, not as

much, but as little, meaning as they possibly can out of the early narratives of the Bible. Marvellous is the ingenuity which is shown in proving what the early saints did *not* know and did *not* believe. But I still think we ought to read the Old Testament under the reflected light of the New, and to extract from it, not as little, but as much truth as we honestly can. Has the principle of Old Testament interpretation, as illustrated in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, been invalidated? Development implies a beginning as well as an end, germs as well as fruits. Are seeds less real than roses?

The literature of this subject is immense, and I claim acquaintance with but a small fraction of it. Since this book went to the press, I have read Professor Ryle on the *Early Narratives of Genesis*; and, whilst regretting it had not come under my notice before to enable me to give more point to certain strictures, it has only confirmed me in the belief that the mythical theory of the beginning of Genesis presents us with a very lame and inadequate introduction to the volume of Divine Revelation, claiming our loyalty and faith. I have also just read a lecture (*Church Times*, February 19, 1897) recently delivered by Canon Gore, in which he attempts the reconciliation of the evolutionary origin of man with the Christian doctrine of the Fall. The

impression left on my mind is that he either dilutes the evolutionary theory of the origin or the Biblical doctrine of the fall of man, or rather that he dilutes both. Either Moses in the Old Testament and St. Paul in the New employed language unjustifiably strong, or Canon Gore uses language excessively weak.

Indeed, one begins to wonder what is it Christianity requires us to believe. According to a certain class of influential theological writers, it does not require us to believe in the first eleven chapters of Genesis; it does not require us to believe in Hebrew history as presented in the Pentateuch; it does not require us to believe in the infallibility even of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is it a healthy tendency of the modern theological mind to be thus continually endeavouring to reduce the Christian faith to a minimum, to be always asking, not how much, but how little, we may believe?

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WHITCHURCH, NEAR CARDIFF.

February 24, 1897.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

THE PENTATEUCH AND CRITICISM

PART I

AN impression often prevails that the Bible is a book adapted only for scholars, and that special training is necessary to its right apprehension and profitable use. That, however, is a grievous mistake. The Bible is a book designed not for scholars, but for men ; not for specialists in the higher walks of life, but for the bulk of the population of the world. Scholarship is a valuable auxiliary, but only an auxiliary. Without it the precise signification of words cannot be ascertained. The scholar must be the translator, and our debt to scholarship for exact translations is great. But once the right rendering is ascertained, the linguistic scholar has no signal advantage over others.

The Bible is a religious book, concerning itself principally about the spiritual side of human nature. Its examination, therefore, needs to be carried on with reverence and in a sympathetic spirit. Imagination being the most spiritual faculty in man, it follows that in many respects the poet is the best commentator. Where the exegete saws a knot, the poet cuts it. Hence the illumination of Holy Writ by Dr. Parker in his *People's Bible*. He never brings

forward lexicons, never discusses rules of grammar—he intuitively sees the heart of a passage, and shows it to others, without the aid of dissection or analysis. His rich imagination serves him better as an interpreter of the inner soul, the permanent message, of a paragraph of Scripture than a roomful of lexicons. By this, of course, is not meant that he and others do not use lexicons and conform to the rules of syntax; but they do not carry them under their arms wherever they go, discussing them instead of the Divine Message. The cabinet-maker does not exhibit his tools in the window—he keeps them in the workshop, and exhibits for sale only the articles of furniture ready-made.

There are two ways of studying nature. One is the method of the scientist, who investigates the laws of nature, calculates the distance of the stars, weighs the air in balances, analyses the flower into its chemical elements. Inestimable is the service this method of studying nature renders to humanity, the method which has created modern civilisation. The other is the method of the poet, and is as old as the world. The poet may know but little about physical laws, has never thought how many tons of gases go to constitute the sun, has no idea how to extract the aroma from the rose and preserve it in a corked phial; and yet he is acknowledged to be nearer the core of things than his more precise and learned brother.

“Give me a theme,” a little critic cried,

“And I will do my part.”

“’Tis not a theme you need,” the world replied;

“You need a heart.”

What the scientist is to nature, that is the exegete to the Bible. He analyses, dissects, divides, and the service he renders deserves heartiest recognition. The man of feeling and imagination sees more deeply, is nearer the untold Secret, feels more profoundly the inscrutable Mystery which people name God. Think of the Lord Jesus, who, according to modern theorists, was innocent of Hebrew and other learning requisite to literary criticism,—how straight He walked to the heart of truth! “I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Mark xii. 27). Mere exegesis had failed to discover in that verse the truth of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the dead. Lay the emphasis on the present tense of the verb, and you cannot strike the spark; throw the stress on the substantive God, and yet you come short of the truth. But what no exegesis could perceive the lively pious imagination of the Saviour straightway divined. It is not a truth of exegesis, but a truth of poetry.

Better, however, than either scholarship or imagination is faith, a good honest believing heart—an inward experience of the objective truths of Revelation. “The life is the light of men.” Not the light is the life, but the life is the light. To appreciate the best things of the Bible, we must read it not through the head, but through the heart. Hence “heart” is the great comprehensive word of the Old Testament, whose theology is primarily that of the moral nature. Very little metaphysics you find, the philosophy which is the result of analytic reflection; everything is concrete, living, actual. The man

whose heart has been touched by Divine truth, who has experienced its power in his own life, who has known it to sweeten the bitter waters welling up from his corrupt nature, will not be easily moved by the contrary winds of speculative scholarship. His answer is ready—"I believe, not because of thy saying, for I have heard Him myself, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Inward experience is too strong for the acutest criticism to dislodge, and this experience is the fundamental qualification to rightly understand the Scriptures. "The natural man," however much educated and trained, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 14-16).

These words of St. Paul must not be explained away as conveying an exaggerated meaning. Between the psychical man, however able and erudite, and the inner meaning of God's Word, there is a fixed barrier, an impenetrable veil ; he is no more entitled to pass judgment on it than is the blind to criticise painting. True, the blind can measure the length of the canvas, can even pronounce an opinion on its make and texture ; but when the painting is under discussion, his criticism passes like the idle whistling wind. Thus the psychical man may discuss documents, examine their age and composition, and this is the function of Biblical criticism ; but when we come to the higher verities, the supernatural

and the Divine, he possesses not the competency necessary to pronounce a valid judgment. Let the eyes be opened, the film removed—in other words, let the man be born again, and he will *see* the Kingdom of God. The denials of one class and the theories of another he brushes like cobwebs aside. “He that believeth shall not make haste.” Scholarship, imagination, experience—these three are the great factors in Biblical interpretation; but the greatest of these is experience, the very qualification within the reach of the mass of believers.

The permanent value of books and their real contribution to the mental and spiritual wealth of the world are not to be estimated by the din and noise attendant on their publication. It is easier to achieve reputation as a destroyer than as a constructor, as an incendiary than as a builder. Labour the year long to erect a house, solid, firm, and spacious, and no one will stop to inspect your work or give you a word of commendation. But set fire to a building, and all the inhabitants of the town will congregate to witness the blaze, and there will be more talk about one house burning than about one hundred houses-building. Popularity always waits upon works of destruction. The same principle operates largely in the world of mind. Attack the cherished beliefs of mankind, attempt to undermine the hallowed faith of millenniums, contradict the affirmations of the wisest and best of the race, and you will command attention beyond your real deserts. To the fascination of this false glamour are especially exposed the young people of the present day, who are in danger of mistaking a distant bonfire for the rising sun.

“Those whom the age delights to honour,” writes Dr. Munro Gibson, “are not the builders, but the destroyers; not those who open new windows in heaven, but those who are most assiduous in their efforts to close the old ones; not those who seek to build our knowledge of spiritual things on sure foundations, but those who are trying to loosen the old foundations or undermine them altogether. It would seem as if the signs of the times almost justified our taking up the lament of the bard of old: ‘A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees. But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers’ (Ps. lxxiv. 5, 6). The time was, when a man that would go out into the forest and gather material for building the temple of the Lord, was the man whom the people delighted to honour. But now the man that uses axe and hammer, not in making anything new of his own, or in making anything at all, but in hacking and marring the carved work of God’s sanctuary, is sure to be cheered on by a sufficient number of thoughtless sympathisers. No one who has watched the signs of the times at all closely, will be disposed to doubt that, if there were issued at the same time two works on religious themes by authors equally well known and of equal ability, the one constructive and the other destructive, the one conservative and the other critical, the latter would have a very much larger sale, and attract much greater attention than the other.”¹

The popularity, however, of this class of books is shortlived. “It cometh up in a night, and in

¹ *The Ages before Moses*, p. 12.

a night perisheth." To be original and novel is comparatively easy when you leave the king's highway, striking across the fields, and having only the virgin soil upon which to leave the print of your foot. The difficulty is to walk along the highroad of thought, trodden by the feet of hundreds of deep thinkers, and yet to step sufficiently heavy to leave your mark for the next generation to see. This alone is worth striving for.

These remarks are made in view of the prominence given in the magazine literature of the day to the negative school in Biblical criticism. Because of this prominence many young people are apt to imagine that the so-called Higher Critics surpass all others in scholarship, ability, and insight. Not necessarily. Remember that able scholars are ranked on the one side as well as on the other; let us not therefore be blinded by mere glitter. "Try the spirits whether they be of God." In every age the Bible has met with stout-hearted opponents. The same cavilling spirit which led the critics a century ago to deny the Homeric authorship of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and which half a century later induced them to traverse the apostolic authorship of the New Testament, now instigates them to question the Mosaic authorship of the first section of the Old Testament. But as in the first two instances the attempt, though characterised by apparently extraordinary analytic perception, signally failed, so, I feel confident, in the present case the Higher Criticism will have to beat a retreat.

After Astruc, the physician of Louis XIV., called attention in 1753 to the systematic occurrence of the

words God and Lord, Elohim and Jehovah, in the composition of Genesis, and therefore to two sets of documents—a valuable discovery and accepted by most modern theologians—the members of the French Academy utilised their ingenuity to convert it into an indictment, not only of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, but of the supernatural in general. From the French Academicians it passed into the hands of the more patient and learned Germans, the majority of whom were animated by a spirit of antagonism to faith in the supernatural. Graf, Kuenen,¹ and Wellhausen, the three great champions of the Higher Criticism, are avowed disbelievers in the supernatural. That is to say, they scout both miracle and prophecy; to them Divine inspiration is an idle dream. This is not mentioned to their prejudice or to the disparagement of their labours; but that our young men may grasp the situation, and discern the real kernel of the controversy that is now waging. It is a battle between the natural and the supernatural, between faith in God as the mere God of nature and faith in Him as also the God of grace. The celebrated advocates of the Higher Criticism already named are disbelievers in miracle, in prophecy, in inspiration, in the divinity of Christ—in a word, in the whole scheme of redemptive grace. Their herculean labours in connection with the criticism of the Old Testament they undertook with the express object of explaining the rise of the religion of Israel on purely naturalistic grounds, without any special Divine intervention in the way of revelation or inspiration. With what result?

¹ Kuenen is a Dutchman.

With the result that they deny the historic trustworthiness of the Pentateuch. Genesis is myth, fiction, legend—everything but reliable history. Even our English Professor Cheyne goes so far as to say that our children should be taught after a certain age that Genesis is not history, only a compilation of legendary lore.¹

In passing over from Germany into England, the Higher Criticism underwent a decided change for the better, not in scholarship, but in faith. At all events, it passed into the hands of scholars who profess to be believers in the supernatural. But be that as it may, from a Christian standpoint the pedigree is bad. No theories from such a quarter should be entertained without a scrupulous examination of their credentials; and not till scholars of Christian repute, like Canon Driver and the late Professor Robertson Smith, became the godfathers of the Higher Criticism, did it find welcome and a home in the churches, or rather the manses, of Great Britain. When the Greeks could not capture Troy by force of arms, they resorted, says the story, to guile. Professing great admiration for the valour of the Trojans, they sent the latter a present of a large wooden horse. Flattered by this rare testimony to their intrepidity, the Trojans innocently opened the city gates to admit of the entrance of the Grecian gift. But concealed within the wooden structure were mighty armed warriors, who, rushing out under the cover of night, opened the gates for the enemy to enter. What they failed to do by force, they accomplished by stratagem. It is always risky to

¹ *Contemporary Review*, vol. lxvi., p. 91.

receive presents from the Greeks. Down to within a few years the Higher Critics were outside the walls of the Christian Church, vehement deniers of the supernatural; now they are to be found within its precincts, and it behoves us to examine their pretensions with the greatest care.

The English critics profess faith in the supernatural, and their testimony we gladly receive. Their faith in the Pentateuch as an inspired production, however, I am not able to reconcile with their faith in their own criticism regarding its composition. If Canon Driver can, he ought to do it with all speed, for it would disarm much opposition and allay many apprehensions. His attempts heretofore in this direction cannot be considered satisfactory. To further assure my own mind on the subject, I have taken the precaution of reperusing the learned canon's volume of sermons on the Old Testament, published to show how the Christian faith comports with the results of the Higher Criticism. The impression left upon me is that there is a distinct fall in the moral temperature the moment he touches the supernatural—all enthusiasm seems to die out. The supernatural he reduces to the lowest minimum possible; but I see not why the supernatural should be admitted at all, unless it be admitted to some purpose. Such preaching would never save the world, nor lift the Church to a higher plane in the spiritual life. Of course, in a scholar, in whom the critical temperament has been highly trained, much enthusiasm is not to be expected; and yet the lack of it is a serious disqualification to understand Moses or interpret Isaiah—men whose

moral nature was all aflame with the fire of God.

Dr. Delitzsch, whilst adopting the view of the more recent composition of the Pentateuch in its *present* form, firmly maintains its pre-existence in a more *ancient* form. The historicity of the Pentateuch is with him a cardinal article of faith. The existence of the Tabernacle, the prevalence of the chief festivals, and the institution of the Aaronic priesthood from the Mosaic age he unhesitatingly accepts. The orations attributed to Moses in Deuteronomy he considers to be not inventions or dramatisations, but literary enlargements of authentic discourses of the lawgiver, just as the discourses of the Lord Jesus in the Fourth Gospel are by the evangelist drawn out, and their inner meaning evoked thereby into greater clearness. In the introduction to his commentary on Genesis, Dr. Delitzsch continually refers to national traditions as furnishing reliable material to the more recent compilers. Though he does not say whether he means oral or written traditions, yet we are justified in concluding that he comprises both. Canon Driver also drops hints which would imply that this is also his standpoint; yet he does not separate himself with the same decision as Delitzsch from the Wellhausen school. To the theory of Delitzsch orthodox theologians could, from the point of view of doctrine, offer no great resistance; for, though admitting that the present form of the Pentateuch is post-exilic, he yet strenuously maintains that the substance of the legislation and much of its language stretch back to the Mosaic age, and that the books are therefore

historically credible. Delitzsch agrees in essence with the orthodox view, and is in direct antagonism to the theory of Wellhausen, so enthusiastically espoused in this country by the late Robertson Smith, especially in its attempt at the reconstruction of Israelite history.

From the critics I pass on to their criticisms. Here, however, be it remarked that I do not imagine for a moment that the traditional view does not need rectification—our views of all the doctrines need rectification from time to time. What is protested against is not its rectification, but its total subversion. Let us then inquire what the two views are in their main features, for our limits will not allow of our entering into details and examining all the proposed modifications of the one or the other.

What is the modern analytic view? That the books of the Pentateuch (or Hexateuch), with the exception perhaps of Exod. xx.-xxiii., were not composed till about the time of the Exile—a little before and a little after ; therefore, long subsequent to the transpiration of the events whose history they record. To the Pentateuch are ascribed from seven to twelve successive authors, and the critics profess ability to apportion to each his share of the work, even to the dividing of a sentence in half. The authors, living between the age of Hezekiah and Ezra, projected their own ideas into the bygone times, so that Genesis and Exodus do not pourtray the patriarchal and Mosaic ages, but the times of the writers themselves, *who painted on the canvas of the past the ideas of the then present*. Mark that well. In order to do the Higher Critics full justice I will

here quote the language of the learned and venerable Bishop of Bath and Wells as to their method of procedure: "First, the Elohist narrative. Next the Jehovistic story-book. But this division does not meet all the exigencies of the case. A third writer has to be invented, who partakes of some of the characteristics of both the Jehovist and Elohist. These three contributors are distinguished by the letters E, J, and JE. A fourth or fifth or sixth is the Deuteronomist, and others who write in his spirit, marked by the letters D, D¹, D². But the combined labours of E and J and JE and the D's did not come into their present shape at once. We have to distinguish as separate works: (1) The Priestly Code, comprising Leviticus and the allied portions of Exodus and Numbers, and this again is subdivided into P¹, P², P³, according as they wrote in the priestly spirit. (2) The Book of the Covenant, comprising Exod. xxi.-xxiii., and other passages relating to Covenants represented by Q, meaning four. (3) Deuteronomy, and according to some a Book of Holiness. It is also thought that some other fragments and interpolations may have gone to make up the whole. And then, finally, there is R, the Redactor or Editor of the whole Hexateuch, and successive redactors, as R², R³, etc."¹

In the name of common sense and universal experience, I venture to ask, Was ever a book composed like that? was ever a book criticised like that? It reminds me of the criticisms passed upon our countryman's song, "God bless the Prince of Wales." On its publication such was its popularity

¹ *Examination of the Two Books of Chronicles.*

that it provoked the hostility of a number of metropolitan critics. The composition was declared to be devoid of originality, a fragment of a bar being found in a certain oratorio, another combination of two or three notes found in another song, till at last the leading comic paper gave the over-acute critics their quietus by solemnly undertaking to find every single note in music previously published. Thereupon the charge of plagiarism fell flat, and the song lives, second only in popularity to the national anthem. Not dissimilar is the method whereby the Higher Critics have conducted their analysis of the Pentateuch. The common sense, not only of the mass of readers, but of trained critics in other departments of literature, is shocked, and signs are not wanting that British and Continental scholarship is veering round—a reaction, it would seem, has already set in.

What is the orthodox or conservative view? That the Pentateuch is substantially the work of Moses and his helpers. He was an eye and ear witness of all the transactions recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; consequently there is no mystery as to the materials for, or the manner of, their composition.

But as Genesis deals with events in the remote past, in its preparation he must have resorted to another method. What was that method? No theologian ever imagined that he received the patriarchal and antediluvian history ready-made from heaven. The view of all sane theologians is that Moses wrote the book under the same conditions as other historians. He did not receive historic

truth by revelation—he had to search for it like all other investigators. He gathered information from folklore and oral tradition, collected whatever documents he could. With these materials in his possession he sat down to write the Book of Genesis. How does he proceed? Does he disguise the originals by paraphrasing them in his own language so that one uniform style might pervade the whole? No; that is the modern European style, which converts a book into a copyright, and seeks out of authorship to make money and reputation. Moses proceeds in the Oriental fashion, letting characters and facts proclaim themselves. He examines his authorities carefully, compares them scrupulously, excises what is incompatible with the object in view. He then writes his history, inserting here an extract and there a quotation, and making of the fragments one continuous and consistent whole, interpreting the facts in the light of the religious idea,—the idea of God working out the salvation of the world through an elect people. Genesis is then a compilation. Why not? Is not all history a compilation? And the more the original authorities are allowed to speak, the more faithful and reliable the history.

According to this view, where is inspiration? Inspiration for its own sake is of no value. The doctrine of inspiration is of value only as a guarantee of truth. If we are persuaded of the truth without inspiration, we occupy exactly the same ground as if there were inspiration. Inspiration does not make truth error or error truth. The doctrine of inspiration cannot make the Bible truer than it is, but to us

it is a guarantee of its veracity. Do I then believe in the inspiration of Genesis? Certainly, in a double sense.

First, in a religious history of such vast consequence to the race, I believe that Moses was not left to the exercise of his unaided, unillumined judgment. In the selections he made, the combinations he effected, and the new light he shed on the whole through the predominance of the religious idea, he was divinely guided. If he were not, then he was a tenfold greater genius than he is generally represented to be. Observe the elevation of his style, the purity of his thoughts, the inerrancy of his moral instincts. An aged minister, narrating his religious experience in a synod of our Church, being asked if he read much of the books of Moses, made answer, "Yes, especially Genesis; I read the other books, but Genesis is my favourite—I get more spiritual good out of Genesis." Though only a young man of about eighteen, my attention was particularly arrested by the old man's testimony—I was filled with amazement that the oldest book in the world should contain so much spiritual aliment for nineteenth-century Christians. No mere human intellect, it seems to me, was capable of producing such a book, so free from everything degrading and fantastic, so rich in spiritual truth. Able, learned men in Egypt, Assyria, and other countries were contemporaries of Moses; yet none left behind them memorials comparable to these. How to account for the difference? Only on the ground of the supernatural. Moses' genius was doubtless transcendent, and yet we cannot conceive that he, by dint of mere genius, so surpassed his contemporaries as

to produce Genesis. Moses' genius could not do it ; his genius, divinely inspired, could, and did.

Second, in the sense that Genesis is a record of inspired men. Moses is the first Biblical writer, but not the first inspired man. The authors of Holy Writ were not the only inspired men of antiquity. Inspiration was not confined to writing—it extended to thinking, feeling, speaking, acting. Enoch and Noah in the antediluvian world, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in patriarchal times, were all inspired men, leading inspired lives, speaking inspired words, performing inspired deeds. Genesis is an inspired record of inspired men. In the progress of the centuries the book was frequently transcribed. Considering the character and material of ancient writing, it was inevitable that mistakes should creep in ; and it is possible, nay, probable, that explanatory notes were added to make clear to the copyists' contemporaries what appeared to them obscure. This perhaps suffices to explain the supposed anachronisms, or a large number of them, on which modern criticism has so tenaciously fastened—such as the references to the Canaanites, the enumeration of the kings of Edom, and the identification of ancient place-names by their more recent equivalents. Strike out all these anachronisms, and it makes not the slightest difference to the trend or completeness of the story.

Personally I am prepared to go further, and the majority of Christian ministers will not, I believe, demur, viz., to concede that Moses did not reduce the Pentateuch into one continuous roll or book. It was probably composed in fragments as occasions

demanding and opportunities arose, during the forty years' wanderings in the wilderness; in this fragmentary state it was probably left at his death. He had neither leisure nor facilities for revision; and the first copy of every work is somewhat rough and uneven. In after-times, with the development of literature and religion, these fragments were probably cemented together into one continuous whole, and in the hands of successive editors underwent here and there minor changes, certain modifications in the legislation in the face of new circumstances being unavoidable. That it did not attain its final form till the days of Ezra is probably true; but what of it in its preceding forms? What ought to be considered the date of the publication of a book, that of the first or that of the last edition? Through how many editions the Pentateuch went we cannot tell; what were the minor alterations successively introduced escapes our ken; still the books composing it, in all their essentials, remain the same. The central truth in the traditional view, for which we contend, is—*the historical trustworthiness of the Pentateuch.*

PART II

HAVING roughly sketched the two hypotheses, the constructive and the destructive, the traditional and the negative, let us proceed to consider which we shall choose. For myself I may say that I have examined their respective claims carefully as presented in the standard works, weighed them conscientiously in the balance, once and again wavered in my decision. Yet the longer and more comprehensively I examined them, the more convinced I became that the traditional view is the truer, without of course maintaining for it in all details absolute accuracy. The charge has been made that specialists grow contracted in their view till gradually they become incapable of surveying arguments in their relative importance and large bearings. The contentions of the Higher Critics seem to some extent to sustain the accusation.

Take the following examples, and I name these because, so to speak, they are intellectually portable ^{to} young men, whose acquaintance with the controversy is somewhat limited, being much influenced by them. "It is made a difficulty that, in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, which no one supposes of the same age as the earlier part of the book, the town of Dan is thus named, though it was known as Laish till the

days of the Judges. That such additions have been made here and there to the historical notices of the earlier books, by revisers of different periods, is assumed to prove that the historical portions of the first books of the Bible were written in the land of Canaan, and that not before the period of the Kings! The words 'on this side Jordan,' in Deut. i. 1, it is said, ought to be translated 'across the Jordan,' in which case they would show that the writer lived in West Palestine. Etymologically '*ēbēr*,' the word used, means '*across*'; but unfortunately for the new critics, it was employed arbitrarily, for both east and west, when Deuteronomy was written, without reference to the relative position of the Jordan, or other natural boundary, leaving its meaning to be gathered from an additional word of explanation. Thus, in Num. xxxii. 19, we read, 'For we will not inherit with them on yonder side [*mē'ēbēr*] the Jordan, and forward [or thence on]; because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side [*mē'ēbēr*] Jordan eastward'; so that in this verse '*ēbēr*' stands for both east and west of the Jordan. The word, ultimately, after the conquest of Canaan, was applied to the east side of Jordan; as Perea, which means the same, was at a still later period: but, when the Pentateuch was written, it was used indifferently of the east and west, in reference to the temporary position of the Hebrews, who were still on the eastern side. Its meaning in the first verse of Deuteronomy is, moreover, at once conclusively proved from the fact that the various places mentioned as marking the region intended are all on the east of Jordan.

“ We are further told that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses, from the use of the word *yāmmah*—‘towards the sea’—for westward; and of *Negeb*, the name employed for the southern uplands of Judah, for the south. ‘At Mount Sinai,’ it is said, ‘the sea did not lie to the west, and the Negeb was to the north.’ ‘If the writer lived in Palestine, however, the expressions would be correct.’¹ But it is forgotten that the Hebrews had spoken the language of Palestine for centuries before the birth of Moses, and must have adopted and used its ordinary geographical expressions, in the popular and not the etymological sense. Our word ‘south’ means ‘towards the sun’; but surely an Australian is not wrong in calling Melbourne south of Sydney, though to him it is not really south, that is, towards the sun, but north. Does he say that he goes *south* to India, because that country is etymologically south from Australia?”²

Seeing that these and similar instances are perfectly explicable on the traditional view, one feels that Robertson Smith and others likeminded have pressed them beyond the limits of just and impartial criticism. The hypothesis of the Higher Criticism doubtless removes many minor difficulties, and the consideration of this inclined my judgment in its favour. But on further examination I discovered that it creates new difficulties, graver, more fundamental, and more numerous than those it removes. I shall now enumerate in a general way the reasons

¹ Robertson Smith, *Bible in the Jewish Church*, p. 323.

² Dr. Cunningham Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, vol. v., chap. x.

which have led me to the conclusion that the old hypothesis, somewhat rectified, is preferable to the new.

I. The traditional hypothesis of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch has, it seems to me, fewer literary difficulties to contend with.

Years ago it was customary to object to the Mosaic authorship on the ground that the art of writing was not sufficiently developed for the production of such a large and bulky volume as the Pentateuch. By to-day, however, that objection has lost its force, for archæological research indisputably shows that the age of Moses and the ages immediately preceding were full of literary activity. Professor Sayce tells us that in that century "good schools existed throughout Western Asia, that the people of Canaan could read and write before the Israelitish conquest, that there was an active literary intercourse from one end of the civilised east to the other."¹ The recently discovered library of Assurbanipal affords sufficient evidence that this presentation of the then state of education is not exaggerated or overdrawn.

Closely allied with this is the objection that the richness of the vocabulary and the easy flow of the language are such as to indicate that the composition of the Pentateuch must belong to the golden period of the Hebrew tongue, that the comparative excellence of its style is inconsistent with its early production during the desert wanderings. Unfortunately we have no Hebrew writing outside Holy Writ to enable us to institute a comparison. If we wanted to base

¹ *Contemporary Review*, August, 1888.

an argument on the English of the Authorised Version of the Bible, it could be done by appealing to earlier and later writings. For instance, if the word "*its*" was used in a book, we would be presumably right in fixing its date after the year 1600, for before that time its employment is doubtful. Its total absence from the English Bible shows that the translation of the latter was made at or before the beginning of the seventeenth century. But in the case of the Pentateuch there is no Hebrew book older than itself, and no contemporaneous writing by which to test its literary style.

Comparing the language of Jeremiah with that of the Pentateuch, the change, it must be conceded, is not so striking as might beforehand be expected. But ancient times should not be compared with modern, so full of stress and rush: that would be as unfair as to compare the speed of the Palestinian ass with that of the British locomotive. In Oriental climes changes are few and slow—fewer and slower of yore than in the present day. Besides, we have parallel cases in other languages. The Latin of Plautus differs but slightly from that of Gregory the Great, eight hundred years afterwards. The Greek of Thucydides is reproduced with comparative perfection in Procopius, one thousand years later. Brugsch speaks of two Egyptian papyri which, though in the date of their composition separated by one thousand years, are practically identical in language and grammar. According to Freytag, the Arabic spoken to-day at Mecca is in vocabulary and syntax, in every essential, the same as that of the Korân. Twelve hundred years have passed since the days of

Mohammed, yet the language has undergone no perceptible change. Bear further in mind that the Pentateuch itself was preventive of rapid vicissitudes in the history of the Hebrew language. That the Bible always tends to check linguistic changes is a well-established fact. The English Bible practically stereotyped the English tongue. How rapid the changes between Chaucer and the Authorised Version! how few the changes since! The Pentateuch, being according to the traditional view the great textbook of the nation, and especially of its master-minds, would inevitably fix their language and mould their style.

Reference has already been made to the anachronisms contained in the first five books—that is, to statements which could only have been made after the settlement of Israel in the Promised Land. That these difficulties exist is patent to all, and that the new hypothesis explains them better than the old cannot in fairness be denied. Take, for example, the following: Gen. xii. 6, xiii. 7, xxxvi. 31-39, xiv. 14; Num. xxxii. 40-43; Deut. xxxiv. 1, 10. Many attempts have been made to explain them on the supposition that they had been written in the Mosaic age; but it cannot be affirmed that they have been completely successful. However, on the rectified theory already sketched, their elucidation is feasible—namely, by viewing them as explanatory additions inserted by later editors or redactors, with a view to make clear what might to late readers appear obscure.

While the anachronisms may thus, on the traditional view, be satisfactorily accounted for, without doing

violence to the body of the history, how do the Higher Critics explain the abounding archaisms contained in the Pentateuch? The anachronisms altogether do not amount to more than twenty or thereabout; the archaic idioms and other peculiarities of vocabulary amount to several scores. The orthodox theologians naturally endeavour to minimise the anachronisms and multiply the archaisms, for human nature will assert itself in the best of men. On the other hand, the Higher Critics make mountains of every molehill in the shape of an anachronism or apparent discrepancy, and strive to explain away everything which appears antique, and therefore inimical to their theory. This tendency is perfectly manifest in so sober-minded a writer as Dr. Driver, not to mention the more extreme men. How slow he is to perceive, or at least to acknowledge, the thousand disagreements in the writings of his own school; and yet how quick to detect and accentuate every apparent inconsistency, however infinitesimally small, in the supposed writings of Moses! But notwithstanding all efforts to slur them over, archaic idioms and linguistic peculiarities do exist in the Pentateuch.

By a rare effort of labour, "Jahn made a collection of more than two hundred words, which either in themselves or the meaning attached to them are peculiar to the Pentateuch; and he collected a second class of expressions which, though employed by later writers, are seldom or never used in the Pentateuch. So great an impression did these philological essays of Jahn produce on the mind of Rosenmüller that although in the first editions of his commentary he

strenuously argued for its late origin, he entirely changed his views, and in the Prolegomena to the third edition had the candour to acknowledge his former error."¹ Much importance need not be attached to this change of sides, for this is a habit much cultivated by German critics—De Wette was changing his opinion on this subject with every new edition of his work; the fact is recorded to prove that in the judgment of competent Hebrew scholars these peculiarities do exist. Write down all the anachronisms on one side of the page and all the archaisms on the other, and the latter will be the length of the former many times over.

As an example take the personal pronoun "*hōō*," which is used in the Pentateuch indifferently for both masculine and feminine, whilst in all the succeeding books it is restricted to the masculine, the feminine being represented by "*hēē*," a form which occurs but rarely in the Pentateuch—twelve times to one hundred and eighty-seven of the other, and not at all in Deuteronomy, notwithstanding the confident assertions of the lateness of its composition. Similarly the noun "*na'ar*," youth, is used in the Pentateuch for both sexes, standing for a maid as well as a lad, whereas in the following books it is used exclusively in the masculine gender, the form "*na'arah*" being employed to designate the female. *Na'ar* in the common gender is employed twenty-one times in the Pentateuch, whilst *na'arah*, in the feminine, but once, and that in Deuteronomy. That the changes here are from a less to a more developed stage of language is self-evident. Take our first

¹ Jamieson, *Com.*, vol. i., p. xxv.

instance, *hōō* and *hēē*. In Genesis *hōō* occurs fifty times, *hēē* but four times; in Exodus *hōō* ten times, *hēē* not once; in Leviticus *hōō* sixty-six times, *hēē* but six times; in Numbers *hōō* twenty-six times, *hēē* but twice; in Deuteronomy *hōō* thirty-five times, *hēē* not at all. How to account for all these things? To suppose that men living in the reign of Hezekiah or Josiah, or after the return from the Babylonish Captivity, consciously and systematically invented all these ancient forms of speech to deceive the unwary, makes too preposterous a demand on our credulity. The traditional view in its core may mount above reason; the critical view contains unreason. That Deuteronomy, composed as is loudly asserted by the Higher Criticism in the era of the Exile, should use the pronoun in its ancient sense thirty times, and not once in its more modern and advanced form, is certainly a problem hard of solution on the new theory. The new best explains the few anachronisms; the old accounts best for the more abundant archaisms.

Again, reflect a moment on the striking anthropomorphic expressions contained in the Pentateuch, a feature much more marked than in the succeeding books. Poetry goes before prose. Every child is a poet—he speaks in poetry, thinks in poetry, feels in poetry. All his first words are concrete, metaphorical, figurative. Concrete terms have the precedence; abstractions come later on. Hence in the first efforts of thought concrete terms are applied to spiritual truths, language is tinged with poetry. In the dawn of history men spoke in metaphors. The book repletest of poetry in my possession is an etymological

dictionary. Every word traced to its root is a beautiful figure of speech, a perfect poetic gem. Hence the strong anthropomorphisms of the Pentateuch. The Hebrew never developed like the Greek into an abstract language. In this it resembled the Welsh—good for poetry, bad for philosophy. But as we come down the centuries the anthropomorphisms grow fewer and less marked. The very anthropomorphisms of the Pentateuch seem to indicate its early origin. No post-exilic thinker could have invented them; the very attempt would have done violence to all his religious feelings and convictions. According to the Higher Criticism the Books of Judges and Samuel were written approximately about David's time. That also is the date ascribed to the documents called respectively Elohist and Jehovistic, the foundation documents of the Pentateuch. With great surprise, therefore, we observe that "documents not supposed to differ in the date of their composition differ essentially in their description of the methods of the Divine revelation, and in their modes of representing religious ideas; and more, that the antique representations of the Deity contained in the Jehovistic document are even regarded later in date than the representations of a higher development and purity in the earliest part of the national histories."¹

2. The traditional theory, moreover, is more accordant with the historical character of the Old Testament. By throwing the composition of the earlier books on to the times of the Monarchy and the Exile, from seven hundred to one thousand

¹ Watson, *Genesis*, pp. 144, 146

years after the events had transpired, their trustworthiness as veritable histories is, I will not say, utterly destroyed, but imminently imperilled. Even allowing that the Elohist and Jehovist, about the reign of David, had national traditions to guide them in the writing of their separate stories, yet the case of Mohammed abundantly proves that traditional lore can but cautiously be trusted. Though the prophet of Arabia lived in a literary age and himself wrote the Korân, yet within two hundred years of his death no less than two thousand fables about him were floating in the air, with hardly a particle of truth in any of them.

That tradition is unreliable was also the contention of the Higher Critics thirty and forty years ago, when they strove so valiantly to postpone the composition of the Gospels by one hundred years, to yield time for popular tradition to crystallise into myth. Accordingly, the leading German exponents of the Higher Criticism, having the courage of their system, flatly deny the historical credibility of the Pentateuch. Let me here quote a few sentences from Wellhausen's Prolegomena to the *History of Israel*. "We attain in Genesis to no historical knowledge of the patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them rose among the Israelite people; this later age is here unconsciously projected, in its inner and outward features, into hoar antiquity, and is reflected there in a glorified mirage." "Abraham is not a historical person; he might with more likelihood be regarded as a free creation of unconscious art." "The patriarchs are the ideal prototypes of the true

Israelite." "In the traits of personal character ascribed to them they represent substantially the nature and aspirations of the individual Israelite." "A whole series of stories about the patriarchs are cultus myths." Of incidents in other historical books of Scripture he avers that they "are pious make-ups," "full of inherent impossibilities," "without a word of truth in them."¹

Take, for example, the elaborate account given in Exodus of the construction of the Tabernacle of the Congregation. What have these Higher Critics to say to it? That there is not an atom of historic truth in the whole account. The Tabernacle never existed except in the imagination of the priestly writer after the Exile. Of the institutions of the Passover and Pentecost not a trace, they say, is to be found till about the days of Hezekiah. The Temple of Solomon was not planned after the pattern of the Tabernacle—the Tabernacle was made after the pattern of the Temple, and then only on paper! Between the wilderness sojourn and the reign of Hezekiah no mention is made of them; and as no mention is made of them they did not exist. Lack of evidence is turned into abundance of evidence.

These assertions have been repeated so frequently and loudly, and with so much confidence, that on reading Wellhausen's *History of Israel* on its first introduction to the British public, by Robertson Smith, with such flourish of trumpets, as affording us for the first time the "true key" to the Old Testament history, one felt staggered and amazed.

¹ Pages 320, 321, 325.

Ingenuous readers took for granted that scholarly men would never make such sweeping statements, unless they had perfectly verified their ground. The Bishop of Bath and Wells, however, thought he would test these asseverations by confronting them with the testimony of the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. With what result? That he found an account of six celebrations of the Passover, casual references to several others, and the recognition from age to age of the hereditary Aaronic priesthood—all of which were not invented, according to the Higher Critics, till the epoch of the Babylonish Captivity. If Bishop Hervey is right—and right he undoubtedly is—the contention that Leviticus and the latter half of Exodus were written by a late priest falls with a crash to the ground.

Furthermore, these learned men have maintained with unwavering assurance that the idea of one God and one Sanctuary was unknown to Israel till about the same time, the time of the Captivity. Strange how they crowd all the grand things of the Old Testament into the age of Israel's declension and decrepitude, leaving the golden age of Israel practically emptied of all literature and all theology! This is not in harmony with the philosophy of history, to say the least. However, the above assertion has been so often reiterated that many readers have been more or less imposed upon, never dreaming that able men would hazard such a statement without a sure foundation. "One God, one Sanctuary," Wellhausen tells us, was an axiom unknown till near the time of the Captivity; consequently, the Aaronic priesthood and the elaborate

ritual were unknown, because not needed. Consequently, again, it must have been about this period that those books, Deuteronomy included, were written. Upon this thesis, not upon any recondite study of language, Wellhausen is willing to stake his whole theory. Upon the validity of this assumption, the critics, German and English, found their dates of the composition of the greater part of the Pentateuch.

Lately, however, a Scottish minister¹ brought the German theory and the Bible history face to face. In the sequel the theory of Wellhausen, on its first careful and "scientific" examination, collapses. In the duel between the German and the Scotsman, the latter proves himself in my opinion the better and truer man. So far the Higher Critics in their highminded and highhanded way profess to ignore the book; but, all the same, Dr. Baxter riddles the Prolegomena of Wellhausen with as much severity and banter as Wellhausen was supposed to have riddled the books of Moses. If Wellhausen and his English admirers held that the Israelites did not observe the cardinal truth of their religion—that God is one and that there is none other besides Him, that they often and shamefully apostatised from their high ideal, that they worshipped false idols in the "high places"—they would be perfectly right. From the start the truth of the unity of God was taught them—it was not a new discovery made known in the age of Josiah for the first time; but a truth long ago revealed, though not congenial to their idolatrous hearts. The idea of one supreme

¹ W. L. Baxter, M.A., D.D., *Sanctuary and Sacrifice*.

central sanctuary was not foreign to them ; throughout their entire course the place of the Tabernacle was sacred above all others. Other sanctuaries were suffered, so long as in those places they worshipped the one true God ; but as these other sanctuaries, far from the capital, afforded facilities to the idolatrous people to offer unto the gods of the heathen, it was found expedient to suppress them. Josiah ordered the demolition of all the "high places," of all the local sanctuaries, because they fostered idol-worship. To aver that there is no trace of the truth of one God and one Sanctuary in the Hebrew religion and history, between the wilderness and the Captivity, is in flat contradiction to the only books which afford information on the subject.

The historical books of the Old Testament demonstrate that Israel continually rebelled, went perversely after other gods, thus bringing into prominence the antagonism between the Israelite nation and the Israelite religion. Had their religion been of their own growth or manufacture, the striking contrast between them and it could not have existed. There is not this collision between other nations and their respective religions—the nations and their religions run parallel, without disharmony. But the greatest divergence often prevailed between the Israelites and their religion. "Pass over the isles of Chittim and see, and send unto Kedar and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing," that a nation and its religion should be in continual conflict. "Hath a nation," any nation, "changed their gods, which are no gods? but My

people, Israel, have changed their glory for that which doth not profit," their Jehovah for idols (Jer. ii. 10, 11). The religion and the Israelites being thus constantly opposed to each other, the religion, it is evident, did not originate in their hearts. They did not create it, it was creating them, and at last succeeded in an imperfect way to make them a peculiar possession unto God.

These questions concerning dates and authorship are not to us of much importance in themselves, for the books are what they are, however they came to be. Yet they strike their roots down into problems deeper than themselves, into the natural or supernatural character of the Old Testament. We maintain that Jehovah created the nation; the critics that the nation created Jehovah. We hold that God interposed by miracle and prophecy to redeem Israel; they that Israel gradually wrought out its own redemption. We teach salvation by grace, that is, in virtue of the supernatural; they teach salvation by works, that is, on naturalistic grounds, thus reducing the religion of Israel into one amongst others in the family of religions; and with the uniqueness of the Hebrew religion passes away the Divine pre-eminence of Christianity, as indeed Kuenen is candid enough to avow.

3. The advocates of the new theory, whilst maintaining that it removes many literary difficulties, overlook the ominous fact, patent to most others, that it creates moral difficulties of a very grave and fundamental character. According to them, the priests of the era of the Babylonish Captivity wrote Leviticus, Numbers, and a great

part of Exodus, whilst a great unknown prophet wrote Deuteronomy ; and they all conspired together to pass them off as the legislation of Moses !

Even admitting that their motive was pious, the means were not justified by the end. But if the motive were that often attributed to them by the ablest of the Higher Critics—namely, to secure for themselves the emoluments of office against the encroachments of other classes of officials—then their work was doubly atrocious. To say the least, the nation must have lapsed into a state of inconceivable obtuseness to allow to pass unchallenged forgeries so flagrant. The Israelites have always been a quick-witted race, and on other occasions have exhibited capabilities of keen criticism. Read Jer. xxvi., and note the sound sense of “the elders of the land,” and you will see the mental calibre of the generation which is said to have been imposed upon by designing priests. The men who were so familiar with the history of religion in their land, as these elders showed themselves to be, and who dared resist the priests by passing wholesome strictures upon their murderous intentions, and who supported their arguments by appeals to precedents, were not the men to be duped into the belief that they had always possessed the rich literary and religious heritage contained in the Pentateuch, whereas the whole was a recent invention. They were not the men to suffer two or three priests to palm off upon them whole books, putting a yoke of ritual upon their necks, involving the expenditure of thousands of pounds annually, without inquiring into their credentials. The supposition, besides reflecting seriously

on the moral character of the priests, insults the common sense of the nation—a nation which for keenness of intelligence has always been in the van of ancient and modern civilisation.

Read the Book of Deuteronomy, and judge for yourselves. One perusal of it from beginning to end, without note or comment, will do more to carry conviction into the mind than one hundred arguments deftly handled for or against. It is one of the grandest books in all literature. The writer of it, be he who he may, was one of the finest thinkers, one of the noblest poets, and one of the most devout writers the world has ever seen. The man who was morally and intellectually capable of writing Deuteronomy was, for that very reason, morally and intellectually incapable of trying to deceive his nation by palming it off as the work of another. Morally incapable, because he could not stoop to deception even for the purpose of the religious improvement of the nation; intellectually incapable, for a mind of his calibre would be too much pervaded by genuine humility to pass off his own work as the composition of a genius of the first magnitude like the Hebrew legislator. Only a man who believed himself the equal of Moses would dare ascribe his own orations to Moses; but such intellectual pride would be moral suicide. The two suppositions are wholly incompatible.

The proceedings here described the authors of *Lux Mundi* adorn with the euphonious name of "dramatisation." I venture, however, to say that the common sense, the common conscience, of mankind will call it fabrication. And the Bible has always,

thank God, been a book of common sense. The final court always is the common sense of the common people, who have no theories to uphold and no reputation to vindicate, but who recognise the truth when they see it. Advocates may exhibit their cleverness and their learning; but the twelve men of common sense, without cleverness and without learning, sitting silently in the jury-box, have the decision in their own hands, and they seldom go wrong. Twenty-seven times the Book of Deuteronomy declares that "Moses spake unto the children of Israel" the orations which it reports; it portrays the environments of the lawgiver and of the nation with accuracy and fulness of detail; it affirms that Moses, before his death, committed it to the elders of Israel to be carefully kept alongside the Ark. If that is the method to write a drama, which is the way to write history?

A drama indeed! I can understand a drama like the Book of Job, which bears on its face evidences of its character, and which could make no difference to the world, whether it were poetry or history. It is a solitary episode without connection with history in the past or the future; view it as biography or as poetry, it all comes to the same thing—it does not profess to influence the course of history. The same remarks hold true of Ecclesiastes. But the Book of Deuteronomy demands to be classed in a different category. It presents itself to us in vital connection with past history; and we know that, as a matter of incontrovertible fact, it has more powerfully moulded the subsequent course of human events than any book ever published,—fashioning the life and worship

of Israel, which at last culminated in the Divine Incarnation! However much critics may endeavour to varnish the proceedings by calling them a drama, the common conscience brushes away all cobwebs of scholastic casuistry and calls them by a plainer and a blunter name. Read the book: can you in imagination associate trickery of any kind, from whatever motive, with its composition or promulgation? Its grand morality, its lofty poetry, its spiritual depth and richness stamp it as an honest book, the work of an honest man—honest to the core, honest out and out, through and through. The ancient prophets were no Jesuits; Deuteronomy did not, could not, originate in Jesuitism. Whatever difficulties confront the traditional view, they are but literary and intellectual, whereas the difficulties connected with the modern view involve the gravest moral considerations.

4. Observe further that the whole history of Israel is a distinct attestation of the truth that Israel's laws were substantially completed, and consequently the Pentateuch practically finished, in the wilderness. It is quite possible, and perfectly consistent with the Mosaic authorship, that Ezra or some other godly and inspired scribe, in after-ages, codified the laws; but codification is not legislation. What we contend for is that Moses was the legislator. If the laws of Israel were not then made, when were they made? We demand, not a conjecture, but a "scientific" answer. The judges are never seen enacting laws, only governing according to them. The kings are never described as framing laws, only as obeying them, or, more frequently,

breaking them. Who then made the laws, civil and ecclesiastical, if not Moses? A most singular phenomenon this—a nation, a state, springing up, and no account after its constitution in the wilderness of any attempt by king or elders, by monarch or council, to formulate laws for its government; and yet the laws are there. It is possible to write a constitutional history of England, a constitutional history of Rome, a constitutional history of Greece, tracing the legislation in its changes and additions from century to century. But can you write a constitutional history of Israel other than a paraphrase of that contained in the Old Testament? I do not inquire if you can attempt a reconstruction of her history, to evince your own subtilty of mind—Wellhausen and his school have essayed that; but one thing is clear, that the old theocratic historians and the modern critical historians are diametrically opposed in their method of presenting and interpreting the story. What the former put first, the latter place last. However, the Old Testament itself is our ultimate authority; and where on its pages, after the emergence of Israel from the wilderness, do you discover any attempt at the repeal of old laws or the enactment of new ones? This absence of all reference to legislation in subsequent history separates Israel from all other nations, and suffices, almost of itself, to convince me that Israel began its career fully equipped with a body of laws sufficient to guide it in the course of its development. The nation began its life in Canaan with the Pentateuch, substantially as it is to-day as its most precious heirloom.

5. Pass on to the theological bearings of the discussion. The modern negative view strikes at bottom against faith in the supernatural. Be it far from me to suggest that individual members of the Critical School have lost faith in the supernatural—men are often better than their systems, the heart is often sounder than the head. I am only arguing against the critical scheme. According to Dr. Driver, the inspiration of the Bible is “presupposed.” But the question is, Can the presupposition be converted into a conclusion? Personally I fail to see that it can.

The authors of *Lux Mundi*, sensitive to the disharmony between the Higher Criticism and the Christian faith as heretofore understood by the Christian Church, accepted the results of criticism hardly a century old, and set about modifying, if not mutilating, the faith which has weathered the storms of two millenniums. The fundamental question, however, is, Did Israel make the religion, or did the religion make Israel? Our answer is, God made the religion, and the religion made Israel. The religion of Israel was a revealed religion; not merely the product of the improved consciousness of the nation, but the fruit of the Divine love and the manifestation of the Divine purposes of grace. The religious consciousness of no individual, of no nation, improves save as it is influenced from without and from above. No; it was not the expression of the national heart of Israel, but the utterance of the Divine Heart; and, therefore, a supernatural religion, on a higher level of spiritual truth than the people in their corporate capacity ever attained to.

A parallel is presented in the New Testament. Christianity in its truth and purity was fully revealed in the first century, the permanent standard of faith and practice being then set up. Ever since, the Christian Church has been striving upwards to the attainment of the standard,—with many serious and protracted relapses, it is true; yet no one will deny that Christian society occupies to-day a much more elevated platform in thought and conduct than it did at the beginning of our era. Similarly we hold that God gave Israel, at the commencement of their marvellous career, a body of truth, of laws, of institutions, to be unto them thenceforward an ideal, towards the realisation of which it was their duty in all the subsequent centuries to aspire. Thus, according to the traditional view, the religion of Israel is a revelation, carrying with it faith in the supernatural—in miracles, prophecy, and grace, for grace is the one thing supernatural for the sake of which every other supernatural exists. The English section of the Higher Critics also believe the Pentateuch to be a Divine revelation; but how to harmonise their faith in it as a revelation with their criticism of it as a composition is what they have not yet succeeded in showing. For a while the two may live together; but in the long-run the faith will overbear the criticism, or the criticism will wither the faith.

6. Finally, the traditional view is in perfect accord with the testimony of Jesus Christ and His Apostles. This the Higher Critics admit; but they meet it by asserting that Christ did not concern Himself about literature, only about ethics and religion, and

that the Apostles "did not know." When in this matter we appeal to Christ's authority, they appeal from His authority to the limitation of His knowledge. Basing themselves upon the doctrine of the Kenosis, the authors of *Lux Mundi* teach that, modify the phraseology as they may in successive editions, the Lord Jesus shared the ignorance of His contemporaries as to the true history of religion, of which He Himself was the centre and goal ; for here the history of the books is largely, if not wholly, the history of the religion.

Do these opinions sit easily on the mind? For my part I cannot say that they do. It may be urged that the Lord Jesus Himself avows ignorance of the date of the Judgment Day. Yes; once, and only once, He did profess ignorance touching one particular point, knowledge of which would not assist the moral development of the human race. But from one instance concerning a date in the far-off future are you prepared to draw a sweeping generalisation of universal ignorance, reducing Him, outside the sphere of ethics, to the level of His contemporaries? Is it not more consonant with all that is sacred and reverend in the Bible to consider that confession of nescience on a single point as the exception which confirms the rule? Everywhere else He quietly asserts His perfect knowledge of what is in God, of what is in man, of what is in the Bible ; not in that blatant, egotistic manner which stamps a man a vulgar pedant, but with that calm assurance and serene restraint which always carry conviction. "That which we know we speak ; that which we have seen we testify." "For He

whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God ; for not by measure did God give unto Him the Spirit." "He knew them all, and there was no need that any should testify to Him of man, for He knew what was in man."

Read the four Gospels, and the impression the Lord Jesus makes on the mind is that of universal, infallible knowledge ; all along we move in a circle of resplendent light, without the shade of a shadow. Not a single instance of tripping or mental uncertainty can be cited. That being the case, his acknowledgment of limitation concerning a future date, *the concealment of which helps on the morality of the world*, should be viewed, not as a proof of general ignorance, but of universal knowledge. Suppose to-day a man should say,—I have studied astronomy and geology, jurisprudence and theology ; I have gone the round of the circle of the sciences, with one exception—of the science of electricity I plead ignorance. Would you take his frank avowal of unacquaintance with one branch an evidence of his general lack of knowledge? Rather would it not be taken as a proof of universal information? I am anxious to press this home upon the attention of the younger brethren, for their adoption of the Higher Criticism has, I fear, already told upon their estimation of the Person of Christ. The force of the concurrence of the Saviour in the traditional view of the Old Testament is neutralised by the authors of *Lux Mundi* by pleading His nescience. Bishop Ellicott, however, whose scholarship and sound judgment as an exegete are known in all the Churches, in his book *Christus Comprobator*, maintains with much gravity and earnest-

ness that the Saviour's opinion on the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is decisive, and ought to be final.

The infallible knowledge, not the infinite knowledge, of the Lord Jesus on these and other subjects is founded on three considerations. First, the sinlessness of His nature. From our sinful, and consequently darkened nature, it is not safe to argue to His sinless, and therefore illumined nature. Sinlessness carries with it illumination; impeccability in the sphere of ethics implies infallibility in the domain of knowledge. Second, in His baptism the Holy Spirit was given not by measure unto Him. To imagine that He was ignorant of the true history of the Old Testament religion and writings, which concerned Himself more than the Israelites themselves, is to kill faith, however unintentionally, in the roots. Third, the union of the two natures and their intimate relation the one to the other. In former years the tendency of theology was to lay stress on the supposed fact that the Divine in Christ elevated and ennobled the human; the tendency now is to the other extreme, that in the Incarnation the human depressed the Divine—a proof of the Unitarian or Rationalistic trend of modern thought. The doctrine of the Kenosis is pushed to such an extreme as to foster error.

Bishop Ellicott writes: "From the closeness of the conjunction [between the two natures], it is indisputable that both the body and soul of Christ did receive, by influence of Deity wherewith they were united, qualities and powers above nature." "Surely," says the judicious Hooker, "as the sword

which is made fiery doth not only cut by reason of the sharpness which it simply hath, but also burn by means of that heat which it hath from the fire, so there is no doubt but the Deity of Christ hath enabled that nature which it took of man to do more than man in this world hath power to comprehend.”¹ And the conclusion of Hooker seems inevitable, that the human soul of Christ must have had an ever-present illumination, and, to use his own words, “must of necessity be endued with knowledge so far forth universal, though not that peculiar to Deity itself.” The impression a frequent perusal of His life has made upon me is the same as that He made on St. Peter—“Lord, Thou knowest all things.” Instead of seizing on one verse wherein He confesses ignorance of one future event, the one thing which He would not, and not which He could not, know,—instead of jumping at that one verse and waving it in triumph in proof of the Saviour’s nescience, it is the one statement in the Gospel which, more than anything else, tries my faith. That He knew all things I can understand and believe; that He was ignorant of one thing it is which staggers my intellect and strains my faith. Blessed Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest how hard it is for one of Thy followers, at least, to believe that Thou wert ignorant of one single thing. In the blaze of light encircling Thy brow, I fail to discover one spot of darkness, and, didst Thou Thyself not point it out, mankind would have never detected it!

¹ *Eccl. Polity*, Book V. 54.

CHAPTER I

THE CREATOR AND THE CREATION

IN this first chapter of Genesis, Moses gives in a pictorial, poetic way his views of the creation of the world. This was necessary as a legitimate foundation for his religious teaching. Without sound views of God as Creator, and of nature as creation, the construction of a correct theology is not possible. Divine revelation from beginning to end is founded on the truths here propounded. Wrong views of this fundamental doctrine imply distorted views concerning all other doctrines. Mosaic theology, therefore, properly begins with the creation of the world. Cut away this first chapter of Genesis, and the rest of the Bible will be but a splendid edifice without a foundation, a gorgeous castle hanging in the air. And how grandly Moses begins! From the start the music beats harmonious, rich, and full: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Cuvier, the celebrated naturalist, writes that "a sublimer passage than this from the first word to the last never can nor will come from a human pen." J. G. Staib, an eminent German scholar and theologian, asks: "Whence do these chapters come? I do not know. There they stand, and will ever con-

tinue to stand, however much it has been sought to explain them away ; and there, doubtless, they will remain until the end of the world, until the conclusion of God's kingdom on earth joins hands with the beginning, and the light of the beginning can again be recognised in the light of the end, and the light of the end in the light of the beginning, that God may still be all in all." From a literary point of view, therefore, Moses at once struck the highest keynote. He is characterised by dignity of movement and sublimity of conception, which at once place him in the forefront of literary artists. Observe the fulness of his matter, the sonorousness of his cadences, the archaic dignity of his language, here and throughout the Pentateuch. Whoever composed these five books, without controversy he has a grandeur about him which strikes his readers dumb with amazement. View him simply as a writer, from the standpoint of literature, and where among his contemporaries, or indeed among his successors for centuries after, will you find his compeer ?

I. "In the beginning, God!" True to unsophisticated human nature, and in perfect accord with the whole spirit of the Bible, Moses does not attempt to prove the existence of God. A proof that God existed was redundant—in Moses' time mankind admitted too many gods. Instead of beginning with nature, and climbing up laboriously on a ladder constructed by the cunning hands of logic to nature's God, the writer boldly begins at the other end—at the top, with God ; and from this infinite height with swift wing descends to God's

works. Instead of the creation demonstrating God, God explains the creation. The Being of God is a primary truth, and in Holy Writ is everywhere taken for granted. He holds the same place in the moral world that axioms do in mathematics—He is self-evident, fundamental, necessary, not supported by but supporting every other truth.

Moses writes no explanatory introduction, offers no humble apology. But having been on the mount with God, like an eagle he swoops down upon us majestically. From the loftiest altitude, from the sublimest verity, he comes down with transfigured countenance, dazzling his readers with the white light of eternal truth: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." How much grander is that, and more impressive, than if he had carefully welded together small syllogisms to enable us painfully to reach the conclusion that there is a God. Moses' way is the Divine way. Only small, carping, peddling minds it is that demand a proof. If God condescend to demonstrate to us His existence, it will be, not by logic, but by revelation.

The fact is—God cannot be proved; if He could, He would not be God. However large the universe, still it is measurable, finite; and from finite premises we cannot draw infinite conclusions. Belief in the existence of a Divine Being is independent of logic, has prevailed before the laws of logic were formulated, and is invincible to-day in minds innocent of all school learning. It is a truth, not of reasoning, but of reason; not of logic, but of mind. "A God who can be proved," says Ulrici,

“is no God ; for the ground of proof is necessarily above the thing proved by it.” In other words, to demonstrate by argument that God exists is an endeavour to ground Him on another truth, larger and stronger and more fundamental than Himself. But where is the truth that exists before God, is deeper and larger than He, independent of Him, but He dependent on it? There is no such truth. God is the foundation truth, and before, beneath, or above Him there is none other. God exists in absolute independence, having the ground of His existence, not without, but within Himself alone. He is the bottom truth, extending like solid granite underneath the whole continent of matter and mind ; consequently all other truth must be built on Him, not He on it. His existence is not an inference from preceding premises, for the manifest reason that there are no premises. God is premise and conclusion, cause and effect, all in one, and accordingly transcends all laws of human argumentation.

From this it follows that faith in God is universal, springing out of the very constitution of human nature, apart from and prior to all culture. Reason cannot deny God without incurring the penalty of self-stultification. Faith in God is an essential endowment of human reason. Hence, wherever man is, religion is. “If you travel through the world,” says Plutarch, “well may you find cities without walls, without literature, without kings, not peopled or inhabited, moneyless and such as desire no coin, which know not what theatres or public halls of bodily exercise mean ; but never was there,

nor ever shall be, any one city seen, without temple, church, or chapel, without some god or other, which useth no prayers nor oaths, no prophecies and divination, no sacrifice either to obtain good blessings or to avert heavy curses and calamities—nay, methinks a man should sooner find a city in the air without any plot of ground whereon it is seated, than any commonwealth altogether void of religion and the opinion of the gods that it should either be first established, or afterwards preserved and maintained in that estate.” So wrote the old Roman two thousand years ago, and his testimony still remains unshaken. Belief in God is native to the heart of man. This is what Tertullian meant when he exclaimed, “O human soul, who art by nature Christian!”

But though this truth is inwrought in the very fabric of the soul, and therefore cannot and needs not be logically proved, yet it is capable of justification, and often needs illustration. “For that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even His eternal power and Godhead” (Rom. i. 19, 20). Look at a sheet of paper. Apparently no marks, except those made with pen and ink, are decipherable upon it. But if you hold it up against the light, you will see other writing, not in ink, but in water. The manufacturer has inscribed in the foolscap his own name. Thus God seems to have engraved on the human soul in water-marks, nay, in blood-marks, His own mysterious

name ; the strange hieroglyphs can never be erased. The idea of God is intertwined with the innermost fibres of our make.

Moses did right when he began at the beginning, when he struck with distinctness the chord which has never been lost in human nature, when he clearly enunciated this fundamental truth, and held it up against the sky for all men to see: "In the beginning, God!" The statement instantly wakes in the deepest recesses of the spirit a distinct echo ; we feel that it is, must be, true. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The innate belief of the soul is illuminated, its outlines are more distinctly sketched, by looking at them in the light of nature. "I asked the earth concerning God," says Augustine ; "it answered, I am not He ; and all that therein is made the same acknowledgment. I asked the sea and the depths, and all that move and live therein ; and they answered, We are not thy God—seek higher. I asked the winds ; but the air with all its inhabitants answered, I am not thy God. I asked the heavens, the sun, the moon, and the stars ; and they answered, Neither are we the God whom thou seekest. And I said to all things that surround me, Ye have told me concerning my God that ye are not He ; speak then to me of Him. And they all cried with loud voices, He made us."¹ They did not give to Augustine the idea of God—that he possessed already, else he would not have gone out in search of Him and catechised Nature concerning Him. But though incapable of imparting, they yet served

¹ *Confessions*, x. 6.

to illumine, the idea, justifying to him the belief which already possessed his soul.

II. The heavens and the earth were created, but God is uncreated. That, it would seem, is the first contrast in the author's mind. A question which every thoughtful man involuntarily asks is, How came God to be? Moses' answer is, He did not come to be, He was, or, rather, He is. Here for the first time in the history of religious thought we come across the idea of a Being uncaused, uncreated, a Being who simply and necessarily is. This idea is of Mosaic origin, by which is meant that it is first to be met with in the books of Moses, whichever way he obtained it, whether by philosophic reflection, direct revelation, or mediately by tradition from his patriarchal ancestors. It is further developed in the new name Jehovah, which in Exodus God appropriates to Himself. This differentiates the theology of Moses from all heathen theologies. In these latter the creators are first created—that is, the gods of heathenism are creatures more than creators, they never attain the idea of absolute divinity. Behind them and before them was some dark power or force, called Fate or Destiny or something equivalent, originating them and dominating over them. The heathen mind discussed the origin of the Godhead more than the origin of matter—to them matter had no origin, but God had. According to Hindoo theology, Brahma, the fruitful parent of all creatures, was not self-existent—he had emerged from an egg. The Egyptian mythology, amid which Moses was brought up, had an elaborate astronomical system to illustrate

how the gods proceeded from one another, and all from Osiris. In the Semitic cosmogonies outside Israel, the idea of a Creator dimly glimmers, but it never stands out bold and distinct, never extricates itself wholly from the forces of nature. Or, if among the common ancestors of the Semitic nations, it did once so exist, it had become lost like a river in the sands of the desert, till in the mud no one could tell which was river and which sand. In the Assyrian cosmogony, the reflection of this idea seems to be more of an after-glow than the morning dawn. The idea of a God self-existent, uncreated, finds no home in it; the gods of Nineveh and Babylon were creatures, having a beginning, dependent on others for their existence.

Neither in the Greek religion, poetry, or philosophy is the idea anywhere to be found of a God uncaused, uncreated, self-existent, without beginning or end. "The ancient Greek gods were not creators, were all created, had a beginning, were to have an end, stood within the order of nature, lived under the shadow of fate. Hesiod tells us that it was from the union of the 'broad-bosomed earth' and the 'starry ouranos' that the gods sprang. One of the Homeric hymns makes earth the spouse of the starlit heaven, the mother of gods. Pindar made gods and men of one race, sons of one mother. This ancient belief lived long and died slowly."¹ This is illustrated by that precocious child Epicurus inquisitively pressing the question, Who made Chaos? Not who made the gods, but who made Chaos, the maker of the gods? From the

¹ Fairbairn, *City of God*, p. 49.

standpoint of the Greek religion no embarrassment was felt in answering who made the gods; the difficulty was who made the maker of the gods, who made Chaos? No Greek sage could answer. Living many centuries after Moses, these brilliant, daring thinkers of Greece, in their conception of the Deity, lag immeasurably behind the Hebrew legislator. Whereas they formulated perplexing and unprofitable questions concerning the pedigrees of the gods, Moses, brushing all these cobwebs aside, steps into the sunlight, and in tones unmistakable says: "In the beginning God—God uncaused, uncreated, underived, God who is the Eternal, God created the heavens and the earth." In all heathen theologies matter is self-existent, and the gods are dependent, created; in the Mosaic theology all this is reversed—God is self-existent, matter created and dependent.

Who made Chaos? Put the question to Plato, the prince of uninspired thinkers, and he can offer no satisfactory solution. Address the question to Moses, and his answer is prompt, decisive, unflinching: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void." He speaks from beside God, as an organon of God, as one having authority, and not as the rhetoricians and philosophers, nor even as modern scientists. How to account for this difference between Moses and Plato? How came Moses to think these high thoughts, to see clearly where the ablest thinkers of antiquity perceived nothing but dense darkness? How came he to solve with apparent ease problems which they had not even the skill to propound? To me there is but one answer

which covers the whole ground—that God was speaking through His servant Moses or through his ancestors who transmitted to the after-time this high conception of God. Deny Divine inspiration to Moses, and he becomes forthwith one of the greatest enigmas of history. Refuse him Divine revelation, and how to account for the first verse of Genesis? how to account for the marvellous solution of the problem of the origin of all things—a problem so complicated that all the learning of Greece had not the skill to state it properly, much less to solve it rightly? Fichte says that this first verse contains more true wisdom than all the folios of ancient philosophy. Andrew Fuller declares that a child can learn in five minutes in this verse more than all the ancient sages ever knew. How to account for it? The supernatural cannot be suppressed.

III. A devout study of the chapter further discovers in it that God is not a physical unity, but a mysterious Personality, both one and many. The notion of unity obviously predominates, for this is the impression the perusal of it has always left on men's minds. It is the one fountain whence all the monotheistic religions flow. The story of the Creation deals a fatal blow to Polytheism. And, in the mind of the writer, one object doubtless was to undermine the colossal idolatry which was everywhere weakening the religious affinities of the race and sapping the ethical foundations of society. But alongside of this dogma of the strict arithmetical Unity of God are discernible vague hints of a Plurality—not plurality of persons yet, nor of hypostases, but a veritable plurality nevertheless, the initial

stage in the preparation of the mind for the fully developed doctrine of the Trinity contained in the New Testament.

These fugitive fore-gleams of the doctrine of the Trinity are thickly scattered through the story. The first is seen in the first verse, "In the beginning God [Elohim, plural] created the heavens and the earth," where a plural nominative is joined to a singular verb. How to explain this unfamiliar syntactical construction? Futile is the answer that it is the usage of language; we want to know the reason for the usage. Moses, who made himself bold as seeing Him who is invisible, possessed in his thinking originality and independence enough to depart from the common usages of speech, if adherence thereto compromised the truth. The other answer, that the plural form is a relic of primeval Polytheism, may be right or wrong; but that Moses introduced a polytheistic thought into the first sentence in his book, written to counteract idolatry, cannot be entertained. The unexpected conjunction, in a book intended to teach Monotheism, of a plural noun with a singular verb obscurely intimates a Plurality within the Unity, the kind of plurality, whether of powers or of persons, being left to future disclosures.

Again, at the close of the chapter, is unexpectedly introduced another mysterious Plural: "And God said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness." Who are included in this wonderful "Us"? The view frequently adopted that God and the angels are intended—the view advocated by Delitzsch—is discounted by three considerations.

First, no mention is yet made of the angels ; second, the angels are not said to have co-operated with God in the formation of man ; third, man is not said to have been created in the image of the angels, but in the image of God. Indeed, the question might legitimately be raised whether the angels, who are mere units, without family bonds, were formed in the image of the Triune One. Better and profounder is the contention of that learned Jew of the Middle Ages, Moses Maimonides, that by the "Us" here are to be understood God on the one hand and Nature on the other. In the production of the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, God did not exercise His direct creative fiat, saying, "Let the creatures be," and the creatures were. But "God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life." "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind." God does not produce them independently of Nature, nor Nature independently of God, but God works in and through Nature. Similarly, in the creation of man, God takes Nature into partnership. As in the production of the earlier animals He addressed Nature, so in the creation of man He continues to speak to Nature, saying, "Let us, Me and thee, make man in our image, after our likeness ; thou shalt weave his body after the pattern already stamped on the animal world, and I will make his soul, his spirit, in the likeness of My own being and attributes. I will meet with thee there, in man." That, paraphrased and expanded, is the profound view of the Jewish commentator—a view which in its vast scope makes ample room for the

modern science of evolution ; and were I constrained to choose between the views of these two learned Jews—one among the most learned men of the Middle Ages, the other among the most learned of the present century—I would not hesitate in showing my preference for the theory of Maimonides, as more consonant with true exegesis.

But a third view is possible—that here we should understand a Plural of Majesty. Much, of course, depends upon the signification we attach to the term. That God should condescend to observe the etiquette of Oriental courts, or speak in the self-magnifying style of earthly potentates, is inconceivable. God is never afraid of saying “ I ” ; that is His usual style throughout the Old Testament. But if we understand by it a real plural, based on fact and not on self-aggrandisement, to the adoption of this term into the already large household of theology there can be no objection. Manifestly the meaning is that God is not a bare, bald, physical, Almighty Atom, but an Ethical Unity, and an ethical unity implies ethical relations, for without relations ethics are impossible. Man is not yet created ; where then are the ethical relations ? Obviously in the interior essence of the Being who speaks. In the Mosaic conception, God is not a physical but a Social Unit, for He speaks to others ; He is in social relations within Himself from eternity, and is therefore capable of entering into social relations external to Himself in time. That Moses or his early readers indulged in this metaphysical strain of reasoning is not for a moment intended ; but unmistakably the language conveys the idea that God is a Social Unit, that somehow

Plurality belongs to His interior nature, without thereby destroying the simplicity of His Essence.

Between these two extremities of the Creation epic are inserted other kindred suggestions, sufficient to set the imagination working without satisfying the reason: "The earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God [*Ruach Elohim*] was moving—brooding—on the face of the waters." What is this Spirit of God? The Jewish rabbis understood it to be a mighty wind, the wind of God, which is also Professor Cheyne's interpretation. That the Hebrew word, like its Greek equivalent, primarily signifies wind or air is, of course, well known; but the verb "brood" has reference to some wind which has life. Physical wind does not "brood." The verb, therefore, helps the noun over from its physical signification to its spiritual equivalent. On the other hand, that Moses and his contemporaries conceived of the Spirit of God as a distinct hypostasis in the Divine Essence is to precipitate the historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity. And yet, on the face of it, the language signifies more than physical air in motion. An influence, emanating from God, for which the writer could find no apter title than Spirit, blew like a warm south wind on the recently created chaotic mass, and this Breath of God vitalised the dead matter, and gradually from the fermenting chaos evolved the present cosmos. Never again is the Spirit of God allowed in the Bible to drop out of sight. By degrees it assumes greater definiteness; and by the time the New Testament is reached, it is no longer "It," but

“He.” The Divine Influence has reached the dignity of a Divine Personality.

Our attention is further arrested by the phrase, seven times repeated, “And God said.” He created, not by a bare act of volition, as one might beforehand have expected, but by His Word. The Divine Will finds expression in a Divine Word, and by this Word all things, from their first inception on the Creation morn to their full completion on the evening of the sixth day, were created. In subsequent Scriptures frequent references are made to this Word of the Creation chapter ; and the uniform teaching is that God created, not by a bare act of will, but by the Utterance of His mouth. Further on this creative Word or Fiat finds its personification in the Wisdom of Proverbs. When we arrive at the New Testament, the poetic personification is superseded by a Divine Personality. The Word of Moses grew into the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Solomon into the Logos of St. John : “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word. This was in the beginning with God. By Him was everything made, and without Him was nothing made that was made.”

In the tiny seed held on the palm of your hand, which the gentlest breeze can blow away, however much magnified by microscopic lens, you cannot perceive the summer rose. And yet, when the rose is exhibited before your wondering eyes, in all the wealth of its colour and the exquisiteness of its fragrance, you are obliged to believe that the rose was potentially in the seedling—roots, stem,

petals, colour, aroma, and all. Thus reading the Creation account in the front page of the Bible, none could foretell, however minute the analysis, into what this mysterious Word would develop. But seeing the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valleys display their incomparable loveliness in the Gospels, we follow back the stalk through the Old Testament, till at last we discover the first germ in the first chapter of Genesis. In the doctrine of Creation is rooted deeply the doctrine of the Incarnation; in the Creation story the doctrine of the Trinity finds its first adumbration. What marvellous correspondences between the beginning of the Bible and the end! What wonderful harmonies fill the contemplative soul with gratitude and praise!

IV. Seeing that God is self-existent, and therefore eternal and self-sufficient, having, within the circle of His own nature, the fellowship requisite for blessedness, why did He create at all? Luther's remark that before creation "He was in a birch plantation cutting rods," wherewith to punish people who ask impertinent questions, has not deterred theologians from propounding the query and pressing for an answer. Moses' reply is plain—He created because He willed. God's freedom to create or not stands out conspicuously in Old Testament theology. Invariably the Creation is traced up to its fountain head in the Divine Sovereignty. The Hebrew doctrine is that God of His good pleasure, in absolute freedom of will, chose to create, when He might have withheld His energising fiat, without either damaging His Godhead or diminishing His beatitude.

No external pressure, no outside necessity, no dark fate constrained Him to exert His omnipotence to people immensity with worlds. He was God blessed for ever. This is a Biblical truth, and should never be forgotten or ignored. It occupies a prominent place in Calvinism, which always, and with propriety, lays due emphasis on the Divine Sovereignty in creation and redemption, sometimes,—to its own detriment, an exclusive emphasis. Further than this the Mosaic theology does not go.

However, when the question is examined in the reflex light of the New Testament, a complementary truth forces itself on the mind—namely, that behind the Sovereign Will lies the Divine Nature, whose ethical essence is love; and love cannot deny itself or hide its light under a bushel—love must impart. This is the *bonitas communicativa* of the older theologians. Being essential love, God could not but communicate of His fulness. The nature, especially in an all-perfect Being, determines the will. The Divine impulse, if one may so speak, moved the Divine will to create. A Divine necessity lay at the root of creation—not a physical, but a moral necessity; and moral necessity is the consummation of freedom. Let us not be frightened by a word. The idea of necessity is familiar to us as applied to God within the sphere of redemption—necessity lay upon God to punish sin, to lay the penalty of our transgression on the great Substitute. But this necessity did not cancel His liberty, making Him a prisoner to His own nature. The same principle holds good in the sphere of creation. Moral necessity is absolute, unconditioned liberty. Even we, in our

limited capacity, will never understand "the perfect law of liberty," till we experience our Christian impulses, our new nature, constraining us, with overpowering force, to the prompt and cheerful pursuit of all Christian service.

"Nothing has given to Pantheism," writes Franz Hoffman, "a greater appearance of reasonableness, and consequently of truth, than the idea that every theistic theory proceeds necessarily upon the supposition of a certain contingency of creation, and that the affirmation, Creation is a free act of God, is identical with the affirmation, It is a contingent or accidental act of God. But whosoever attributes contingency to God subjects Him, only in a manner exactly the opposite of the pantheistic, to blind fate." Perfect love is perfect freedom; and the decree to create is the combined result of the union of these two high attributes of the Divine Being. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. iv. 11).

V. Inasmuch as a moral necessity lay on God to create, many distinguished theologians—Origen in ancient times and Delitzsch in our age—have maintained that the act of creation is eternal, and that therefore the universe is strictly without a beginning. But they seem to overlook the counterbalance of truths, thereby driving the Divine necessity of creation into the suppression of the Divine sovereignty. The Bible, however, holds the one truth over against the other, thereby securing the due "proportion of the faith." But even were the doctrine of Eternal Creation true, as taught by

Origen and Delitzsch, it should be carefully distinguished from the materialistic dogma of the self-existence of the Creation as taught by some modern scientists. The former is theistic, distinguishing between eternal existence and self-existence, thereby making matter and its laws dependent upon God. The latter is atheistic, making matter eternal because self-existent, and therefore in complete independence of a Supreme Being. How remarkable that the writer of Genesis should steer clear of these quagmires! "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

According to Moses, God, at some definite moment in the remote past, came out of His solitude and broke on the silence of the eternal ages by uttering His creative word. The Hebrew poet describes Him as "setting a compass on the face of the deep," marking out in empty space the orbits of the stars. Borrowing this metaphor from the inspired bard, Milton represents this initial act of creation with a majesty and dignity which only writers of the stateliest order can command:

Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in His hand
He took the golden compasses, prepared
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created things.
One foot He centred, and the other turned
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O world!¹

By this act of creation, by which He imposed His own will on the universe, God is represented

¹ *Paradise Lost*, Book VII.

as transcending all the works of His hands—He independent of them, they not independent of Him. Yet this distinctness of the Creator from the creation must not be interpreted into separateness. The Word is followed by the Spirit, who

Dovelike sat brooding on the vast abyss.

The transcendence of God and the immanence of God—these be the two contrary, not contradictory, truths, which in their point of union uphold Hebrew theology, natural and revealed.

CHAPTER II

CREATION AND GEOLOGY

THE first chapter of Genesis gives an account of the creation of the world ; but evidently the account cannot be history in the usual acceptation of the word. For what is history ? The written or traditional testimony of men to a group of occurrences or a succession of events, of which they have either direct or indirect cognisance. Obviously, therefore, a human history is not possible, for men were not present to witness the beginning. In the beginning God alone was ; He was the sole spectator of the initial act of creation. Consequently this Creation story cannot rank as history alongside the memoirs of Napoleon or the annals of Tacitus.

But clearly a natural history of the world is possible, as the result of the close study of the Creation itself, a patient research into the footprints and handprints of the Creator. This is Nature's autobiography, which it is the aim of scientific men to read in the rocks and transcribe into the printed page. Slowly they turn over Nature's ponderous leaves, and endeavour to read thereon their past history.

Two things, however, should be always borne in

mind. First, that hitherto scientists have only turned over a few leaves of Nature's book ; and therefore the history of Creation already written by them is not complete. Second, that the leaves which they have turned over are much blurred, so that their decipherment is not always trustworthy. Every year they are obliged to modify their versions of what Nature really teaches concerning herself. This seems necessary to be said, because of the obvious proneness of specialists, who strenuously deny the infallibility of the Bible, to transfer that infallibility to their science. Whatever Science is, she is neither complete nor inerrant, she has neither read the whole of the book of Nature, nor has she always rightly construed the pages she has examined. No phenomenon is more common than for one generation of scientific men to amend the theories of their predecessors.

‡ The writer of Genesis, however, was not a man of science, and did not profess to write a scientific history. How then to account for this Creation story? That it is the mere product of a lively imagination, however pious and reverent, makes too great a demand on our credulity. Other nations furnish us with cosmogonies in abundance, but in them there is clear evidence of their human source. The imperfections and ignorance of the inventors are clearly stamped on their inventions, which teem with puerilities, absurdities, and are everywhere touched with the marks of our infirmities. But the cosmology of Genesis is in its conception religious, in its description sublime, and, if the testimony of able, learned geologists like Professors Dawson, Dana,

and Guyot is to be believed, harmonious to a wonderful extent, not indeed with the rash conjectures, but with the established facts, of modern science. To me, therefore, there is but one theory possible: that the first author, be he who he may, received Divine illumination, that the Spirit of God, which moved over the chaos of creation, brooded over the confusion of his mind, and evolved this chapter—a standing miracle in literature, the fierce assaults of infidel criticism notwithstanding.

The supposition of Kurtz, popularised in this country in the picturesque pages of Hugh Miller, that God vouchsafed to Moses a series of six visions, in which he saw as in a grand panorama the successive stages of the creative work, has been rendered untenable by the discovery of the Assyrian tablets, now in the British Museum. Reading the Mosaic version and the Chaldæan version, from before the days of Abraham, we are at once struck with the vast superiority of the Mosaic, in its total exemption from all superstitious overgrowth; but more striking than the differences are the resemblances. The conviction is carried home to the mind that the one is borrowed from the other, or rather that the two flow from one common fountain. Where can that common source be found except in the family of Noah? and where could Noah have obtained the information except from the doctrine of Creation as held by the antediluvian Church? Thus we are shut in to a belief in a primeval revelation granted to the first ancestors of the race, of which Moses is only the transcriber.

That Moses had not in view to teach geology

has been already conceded. No one, reading his account, would come away from it having any conception of the recent discoveries of geologic science. But it is one thing to write to teach science, another quite to write so as not to contradict science. It is a healthy instinct of the mind to expect, if not to demand, that revealed truth should not contradict natural truth; and this is all that is here claimed for Moses. The harmony is negative, not positive. Something like supernatural fact was required to mould the expressions in such manner that the Mosaic account would be accepted in every stage of scientific development. The account is in agreement with all stages, in contradiction to none.

“Had Moses written under the guidance of his own independent judgment—had he embodied merely the vague and puerile traditions of the early ages, or put on record his own speculative views and conjectures in natural philosophy—it is next to impossible that he could have framed a narrative containing descriptions so just, and expressed in terms so appropriate, as would not jar with subsequent discoveries made in the material world. The narrative of Moses would have shared the fate of all the ancient cosmogonies delineated by heathen writers as exhibiting the traditions of their respective nations, and which are altogether exploded as—however suited to the simple character and limited capacity of an early, a dark, and credulous age—inconsistent with juster and more enlightened views of the mundane system. But, on the contrary, it still retains a deep and immovable hold on the

rational belief of the majority of men in the most civilised countries of the world; and the reason is, that Moses, writing under the influence of Divine inspiration, seems to have been led, perhaps unconsciously to himself, to employ language which contains a latent expansive meaning, the full import of which time only can evolve, and which, when rightly interpreted, would be capable of adjustment with all the researches and discoveries which the progress of scientific light might shed on the works of God in all future time."¹

Thus this first chapter is written with wonderful breadth. Whilst it is definite, exact, precise in its religious teaching, the great object in view, its phraseology on its material side is characterised by vagueness, elasticity, and is capable of accommodation to every stage of scientific knowledge. So far from being a drawback, this constitutes its distinctive glory: precision, definiteness in its teaching concerning God, elasticity and expansiveness in its references to natural phenomena. It neither antedates by premature disclosures the discoveries of science, nor, on the other hand, does it, like all heathen cosmogonies, contradict these discoveries when made. Those, be they believers or sceptics, who demand that the Bible, if a Divine revelation, should positively harmonise with science hardly know what they ask. Harmonise with science! With what science? The science of the nineteenth century or the science of the tenth or the science of the first? If it accorded with either of these, it would conflict with the others. It will be soon

¹ Dr. Jamieson, *Com.*, vol. i., p. 48.

enough to insist on absolute reconciliation, when we learn what true science really teaches. In another hundred years, savants, yea, the common people, will smile at the crudities and mistakes of Tyndall and Huxley's science. The remark has much point that it is easier to reconcile Genesis with geology than to reconcile the last edition of Lyell's *Geology* with the first—the discrepancies and contradictions are fewer.

I. To understand the drift of this Creation story, we ought to try to catch the writer's spirit. The account is manifestly written in the pictorial, poetic mode, the grand prophetic style, with ever-receding, ever-widening horizons; and the preliminary duty of a faithful interpreter is to drink in the spirit of the document, to partake to as large a degree as possible of the enthusiasm of the author. Read this chapter audibly in your chamber, that your ear may catch its stately rhythm; read it devoutly in a wondering mood, and you will instantly feel that all quibbles are here out of place, such as the controversy concerning the length of the Creation "days,"—whether they signify twenty-four hours on the kitchen clock, or twenty-four million years on the great dial of the universe. In the presence of the rhythmic movement of the Creation work, such inquiries remind us of the man who, on the top of Snowdon, when the sun was rising like a ball of fire, round and large and red, broke on the awe-inspiring silence by asking in a tone of frivolity, Who won the Derby yesterday? That Moses thought of the measurement of time is incredible. If you subjected him to cross-examination, and demanded of him

greater precision in his definition, he would probably have stared you vacantly in the face till you would blush crimson, because of the utter incongruity of the inquiry. The descent, the anti-climax, is ludicrous.

Never require of a poet to define his meaning—he cannot attempt it without abdicating his high vocation. In my student days, fired with the ambition of writing poetry, I published a poem. A carping critic, reviewing the work in a newspaper, quoted certain lines, and inquired contemptuously what could the meaning be. Sensitive as most young authors are, especially if the hot Celtic blood courses swiftly in their veins, I ventured on a reply and attempted a definition. When I beheld my poetry reduced to prose, tame though stately, and printed in small type, the conviction was carried home instantaneously to my mind that I had lost all my beautiful plumage—if ever I had any. The gloss, the colour, the glow were all gone, and the winged poet, who had hoped to carol at the portals of the morn, was a poor barndoor chanticler crowing on the gate-bar. The heavenliest poet Wales produced this century told me he much liked the poem, and was specially captivated by the passage in question, all the more because of its mystic vagueness; but that the explanation I had ventured to offer did not improve it—a judgment all the more humiliating because of my prior consciousness of its truth.

An exact, scientific exposition of an inspired poem is an absurdity. The spirit of criticism and the spirit of poetry or prophecy are the two contrary currents in the world of mind, the centripetal and centrifugal

forces—one binding to the centre, the other struggling to escape therefrom and break the chains of sense. You cannot understand the one by confronting it with the other. Criticism is the centre-seeking, poetry the centre-fleeing force, both doubtless necessary to keep the world in equipoise. The spirit of poetry seeks the vast, the boundless, the immeasurable; it endeavours, so far as in it lies, to transcend the bounds of time and space. Read this chapter with the poet's eye and fire, and it will be true every jot and tittle. Not true in the material, scientific sense, cribbed, cabined, and confined in a fine-wrought iron cage; but true in the large, expanding, ever-growing spiritual vision—as all true poetry is—truer far than even the poet himself knew, truer than science will ever perceive.

Thoughts beyond their thoughts
To those old bards were given.

Never ask a poet for an interpretation of his dream. Never demand of a prophet an exposition of his prophecy,—be it prophecy with its face turned toward the past, as in the present instance, or with its face turned toward the future, as in the apocalyptic visions of St. John. "The prophets inquired and searched diligently, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify" (1 Pet. i. 10, 11). They did not completely understand their own writings, did not fully comprehend their own thoughts. That the truths to which they gave utterance did not originate with them, that they were only the media of their transmission from a mysterious source

above and behind them, their consciousness clearly testified.

This consciousness is universal among all imaginative writers. Accordingly the great poets invoke the inspiration of the Muse. With the poetasters of the day this invocation is an empty form, with no heartfelt earnestness in it. With the poets of the first magnitude, however, it was far otherwise; they felt the rush and swell of the tide of inspiration within them, the tide which betokened the shoreless ocean of living, self-moving truth. Whenever they allotted themselves a mighty task, they prayerfully besought the tide to return, they invoked the uplifting influence of the celestial Muse. What is true of the ethnic poet is trebly true of the Hebrew prophet. This first chapter of Genesis, till we approach it with prophetic eye and fire, will baffle all attempts at a satisfactory interpretation.

It begins at an infinite height: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters." Do you not feel yourselves carried far beyond the boundaries of sense and science? "And the earth was without form and void"—*tohu vabohu*; the weird assonance fills the heart with dread and terror. "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." Writers on oratory, from Longinus down, quote this as a specimen of the sublime in composition, the standard by which to judge other passages laying claim to this rare distinction. The Divine Word breaks on the eternal silence, and booms on, on,

on, through the boundless expanse of the infinite void. "And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night." How long was that night of darkness which hovered over the waters? How long the day which followed? Here Dr. Marcus Dods breaks in: "If the word 'day' in this chapter does not mean a period of twenty-four hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless."¹ What a jarring discordant note is this, in the midst of the rich music of the Creation movement! All this loftiness of thought and magnificence of style, after all, mean—twenty-four hours on the kitchen clock! But even on Dr. Dods' own principle of interpretation, how can it be twenty-four hours, seeing the light only is called Day, whereas the darkness is called Night? He should divide day and night equally, and make them exactly twelve hours each. But, according to Moses, the night was without a beginning, enveloping in its dark shroud, as was becoming, the confused, weltering, primordial chaos; and the day was before the sun either rose or set. Consequently it could not signify a solar day, but a day of the Lord which He Himself had named, or, in the language of the great Augustine, a God-divided, not a man-divided, day.

Attempt not to measure it, else you reduce the Creator into the dimensions of a maker of chronometers. "These are the generations of the earth and the heavens in the *day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens" (Gen. ii. 4). Does "day" here mean twenty-four hours? Even on Dr. Dods' own method of interpretation it plainly includes six

¹ *Genesis* (Expositor's Series), p. 4.

times twenty-four hours. Indisputably the term "day" is used frequently—not less than one hundred times—by Bible writers in a vague, indefinite sense, synonymous with period, contracting and expanding according to the exigencies of the occasion. Can the Higher Critics or their followers suggest a more appropriate Hebrew term for period? I am told they cannot. It is not by taking language in a large pictorial sense, affording room for the imagination to flap therein its big, extended wings, and sail away from the finite to the infinite, that the "interpretation of Scripture is made hopeless," but by insisting on measuring its dimensions with an inch tape and making it fit the carpenter's rule.

The best method of ascertaining the signification of the term in this passage is to ask what impression it left on the minds of its Hebrew readers. Not how German and English students understand the chapter, for these are divided into contentious bands; but how did the Hebrew saints and seers themselves understand it? The Bible is its own best interpreter. This Creation story was the staple of the literature of the ancient sages. Psalms and prophecies without number prove that it was widely read and much studied; echoes of it continually resound throughout the Old Testament. Is there a single verse which indicates or suggests the idea of twenty-four hours? Is not the drift of thought uniformly, without exception, towards long reaches of time? What did Moses himself understand by it? Were he catechised in his cold, critical, unemotional moods, he would probably have been embarrassed to give an answer; his slowness of speech would have suddenly returned;

possibly he might momentarily acquiesce in Dr. Dods' twenty-four hours on the kitchen clock. But the mood in which he wrote is also the mood in which he could interpret—the high, poetic, prophetic, inspirational mood; and happily Moses wrote another short poem, which directly reflects light on the Creation epic.

Read the ninetieth Psalm, "A prayer of Moses, the man of God." That the authorship of this Psalm is contested, I of course know; but men of competent scholarship pronounce in favour of its Mosaic authorship. But be the author who he may, it is clearly an echo of the Creation story, and therefore illustrates the Mosaic meaning. "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations"—generations, ages, periods, *olams*, the great time-word of the Old Testament. Occasionally, by the interpreters, it is lifted from its temporal relations to signify eternity. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world"—do you not discern here the clear echoes of the Creation poem? do you not feel that you are moving on the high altitude of the Creation chapter?—"even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art, O God." "Everlasting": again the great word "*olam*." "From *olam* to *olam*, from period to period, from age to age, Thou art, O God." Do you hear there the tick of the clock? Does the pendulum swing within a mahogany case? From *olam* to *olam*, from age to age, from everlasting to everlasting,—what an immeasurable swing the pendulum takes! What *æon* is in the Greek is *olam* in the Hebrew. "For a thousand years in

Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past." St. Peter's exposition of this cannot be improved: "Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "Our days are passed away in Thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are three-score years and ten." How brief our existence, how fragile our life! "But Thou, O God, art—from olam to olam, from measureless age to measureless age." No; Moses did not mean twenty-four hours. His imagination stretches out and away after limitless time.

How did other Scriptural writers understand this epic? What impressions did it make on their minds? Fortunately we have their interpretation also—not prosaic, technical, scientific, but poetic, imaginative, glowing with religious emotion. Poets best understand poets. Take Prov. viii. 22-31—a passage evidently based on the Creation chapter. We are so accustomed to it that our sense of its marvellous power is somewhat blunted; the following paraphrase will not, therefore, be unacceptable: "The Lord possessed me from the antiquities of the earth,"—as though that, instead of being three thousand years old and one week over, were the remotest conception to which the human mind could reach. "I was with Him yom, yom—day, day, day after day—even with the Ancient of Days, before each of His works of old." Do you hear there the Bells of Aberdovey¹—one, two, three? "Before the tehom, before the springing of the fountains, before the mountains were

¹ A popular Welsh air.

settled, before the hills arose, before the primeval dust of the world, when He was preparing the heavens, when He was setting a compass on the face of the deep, when He made the rakia, or established the clouds to stand above, when He made strong the fountains of the deep, and put His law upon the sea: during all this time I was there, yom, yom—day, day; I was the architect, rejoicing always before Him.”¹

Let us again turn to Job xxxviii. The poet has evidently studied the Mosaic story of Creation; and his imagination catching fire, he paraphrases it in language which fills us with awe and wonderment: “Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man: for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? or who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?” etc. Can you read this sublime passage, and then ask, How long was God making all that, a week? “There are here no narrow computations, no petty fancies.” From Genesis to Malachi there is not a single verse which teaches or suggests that the Mosaic “day” was only twenty-four hours duration;

¹ Professor Tayler Lewis in *Lange's Com.* (American Edition), p. 137.

the invariable tendency is to stretch it out to its utmost possibilities, and then fill it to the brim with Divine wonders. The way wherein Hebrew saints and prophets understood the chapter, and not the view which modern commentators chance to take, determines the general drift and signification of this memorable story.

II. From the time or duration of the Creation let us proceed to pass in rapid review the orderly arrangement of the work here delineated.

According to Moses, during the first three days or periods, primordial matter, produced by the creative fiat, was differentiated into light and darkness, dry land and sea, the water above and the water below, that is, the water which rises and the water which falls. Then, during the three succeeding days or periods, first the inorganic world is duly arranged and prepared to be a fit abode for living creatures. Then is introduced the vegetable kingdom, for in the soil and the air food is already provided for its sustenance. Then follow birds of the air and fishes of the sea to disport in their respective elements. Thereafter the nobler animals, especially the mammalia, make their appearance, for in the luxuriant vegetation already prevalent ample provision is made for their comfort and subsistence. Last of all, when the earth is completely furnished, and all the environments properly adapted, man steps on the scene, a summary of all the preceding works, and the sovereign lord of nature. Is not this also, in general outline, the order promulgated by geological science?

However, on a question of this sort, it is better

to let scientists themselves speak. Dr. Romanes writes that "the order in which the flora and fauna are said by the Mosaic account to have appeared upon the earth corresponds with that which the theory of evolution requires and the evidence of geology proves."¹ Professor Haeckel, the most materialistic of all the evolutionists, in his history of creation, makes a similar admission. "Two great and fundamental ideas," he says, "common also to the non-miraculous theory of development, meet us in the Mosaic history of creation, with surprising clearness and simplicity, in the idea of separation or differentiation, and the idea of progressive development or perfecting. Although Moses looks on the results of the great laws of organic development, which we shall later point out as the necessary conclusion of the doctrine of Descent, as the direct action of a constructive Creator, yet in his theory there lies hidden the ruling idea of a progressive development and a differentiation of the originally simple matter. We can, therefore, bestow our just and sincere admiration on the Jewish lawgiver's grand insight into nature, and his simple and natural hypothesis of creation, without discovering in it a so-called Divine revelation."² To the same purport is the testimony of Sir William Dawson, a scientist who has rendered invaluable service to the Christian faith: "The order of this vision of the creative work, with which the Bible begins the history, is so closely in harmony with the results worked out by geological investigations, that the correspondences have excited marked attention, and have been

¹ *Nature*, Aug., 1881. ² *History of Creation*, vol. i., p. 38.

justly regarded as establishing the common authorship of nature and revelation."

If Moses did not agree with geologists on questions relating to physical science, that need not have invalidated his authority in the department of religion and ethics; but when he does agree, why deprive him of the credit? Why the eagerness, especially in a section of Christian ministers, always in this connection to belaud science at the expense of Moses? I only plead for ordinary fair play to Moses, such as would be accorded any Greek or Latin author. That there are minor discrepancies in details, in our present stage of knowledge, is possible, nay, probable; but it is premature to saddle the responsibility for these on Moses. For what is theology? Man's interpretation of the Bible. And what is science? Man's interpretation of nature. Between these two interpretations there may be collisions, whilst all the time the two books, Nature and the Bible, may be in perfect accord. In his controversy with Mr. Gladstone a few years ago, Professor Huxley supposed he had conclusively convicted Moses of error, because in the first chapter of Genesis the creation of birds is placed before the creation of reptiles, a statement palpably contradictory to established geological truth. But really Professor Huxley only demonstrated that, among his many brilliant accomplishments, knowledge of Hebrew was not included; and, further, that he did not take the trouble to consult the most ordinary commentary before hurling his charge against a document so venerable, for it is now generally understood that the *taninnim* of ver. 21 include reptiles, whilst the

“creeping things” of ver. 24 denote the smaller and lower mammals. It was Huxley, not Moses, who made the mistake.

As Christian ministers it is our duty, whilst not blind to discrepancies existing in our present stage of incomplete knowledge, to enlarge principally on the agreements, the correspondences, the beautiful consonances between the Words and the Works of God. How came these harmonies about? Do they not suggest that He, the work of whose fingers the heavens and the earth are, had also a hand in the composition of this ancient document? “These are only some of the many wonderful harmonies between this old revelation and modern science. I would like to see the doctrine of Chances applied to this problem, to determine what probability there would be of a mere guesser or inventor hitting upon so many things that correspond with what modern science reveals. I do not believe there would be one chance in a million. Is it not far harder for a sensible man to believe that this wonderful apocalypse is the fruit of ignorance and guesswork than that it is the product of inspiration? It is simply absurd that an ignorant man could have guessed so happily. Nay, more. Let any of the scientific men of to-day set themselves down to write out a history of creation in a space no larger than that occupied by the first chapter of Genesis, and I do not believe they could improve on it at all. And if they did succeed in producing anything that would pass for the present, in all probability in ten years it would be out of date. Our apocalypse of creation is not only better than could have been expected of an uninspired man in

the days of the world's ignorance, but it is better than Tyndall or Huxley or Haeckel could do yet. If they think not, let them take a sheet of paper and try." ¹

This wonderful, complicated process reached its culmination and crown of glory in the creation of man the evening of the sixth day. Man, it is evident, though the last created, was the first in the thought and plan of the All-wise Creator. True to Aristotle's proposition, the posterior in appearance is the prior in idea. The first in realisation is the last in plan, and the first in plan the last in realisation—a principle pervading the Kingdom of Nature as well as the Kingdom of Grace. The thought of man is the dominant truth of the world, the proximate final cause of all that exists; everything was planned in the light of this idea, fashioned and regulated with a view to its full embodiment in the first progenitor of the race. All lines, therefore, converge towards this one centre. The plan moves on without hasting and without resting till the Divine Image in a human form was placed on the apex of Creation's pedestal.

Viewed physically man is a microcosmos. The custom prevailed, long before the birth of modern science, to regard man as a summary and condensation, in his own person, of the wider cosmos around him, the head and representative of all the creatures which went before. One of the Christian Fathers gives expression to this truth very much in these precise terms. This also was the truth the Jewish rabbis strove to express metaphorically, when they

¹ Dr. Munro Gibson, *Ages before Moses*, p. 71.

set forth Adam in his creation of gigantic stature, commensurate with the dimensions of the world, but that gradually his physical nature contracted till it assumed the present six feet standard of height. What they meant manifestly was that man is a complete counterpart of the mundane system, that in the external world there is nothing which does not find its counterfoil in the human organism. Man is creation condensed. Modern science furnishes ample corroboration of this. All nature, animate and inanimate, is distinctly reproduced in the human organism. As a microcosmos, man is emphatically a physical being, the veritable centre of the realm of nature.

On the other side of his being man is a microtheos—a reproduction on a finite scale of the substance and attributes of the infinite God Himself: “And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. So God created man; in His own image created He them.” Of the animals and trees the asseveration is made that they were created “after their kind.” Their idea or type was imprinted within their nature in such manner that they could not break away from it. Species, so far as evidence goes, is unalterably fixed. One species cannot unite with another to produce a third. Hybrids have no power of multiplication. In her just austerity Nature strikes them with barrenness. No creature can raise himself, and become a member of a nobler family—he is tied down to his type by unbreakable chains, is created “after his kind,” and can never escape from it. The “transmutation of species” is still a hypothesis, unverified by a single geological specimen.

The most eminent scientific men—Murchison, Agassiz, Owen, and others—have declared themselves in positive antagonism to it. Plants and animals are all tied down to their types. The varieties ever multiply, the type still abides. But of man Moses does not affirm that he was made “after his kind”—a most significant omission. Rather was he created after another “kind,” capable of endless growth and development, till he would “become as one of the gods.” Divinity is the pattern of humanity. There is in God a human and in man a Divine element—a truth to which human consciousness in all nations bears attestation. According to the Assyrian legend, man was modelled out of clay moistened with the blood of a god; and according to the Greek, the human brain was kindled into mental activity by fire stolen from heaven.

In our bodies we belong to the same genus or family as the animals which perish, and like them are subject to physical laws. In our spirits, however, we belong to the same genus or family as God, and like Him are subject, not to physical, but to metaphysical laws. In this Mosaic doctrine of the creation of man in the Divine image is afforded us a clue to the mystery of the Incarnation. Because man, at the beginning of time, was created in the image of God, it was possible for God, in the fulness of time, to be made in the likeness of man. Postulate any other beginning to man than that taught by Moses, and the Incarnation becomes an impossibility. But as man was created in the Divine image and likeness, there is an original, fundamental correspondence or analogy between God and man. This

doubtless is what is intended by modern writers when they speak of the essential humanity of God and the essential divinity of man. They mean that God and man are built on the same plan, put together on the same pattern. The scale differs, the plan is the same.

More: not only is the doctrine of Moses concerning the creation of man in God's image the foundation of the New Testament doctrine of the Incarnation of God, making it possible and becoming; but it is also the condition on which man may be adopted into the Divine family and made "partaker of the Divine nature." Originally, in an incipient state, we are the offspring of God, belonging to the same family or genus as the Divine Three—we are made, not "after our kind," but in a mysterious way after the Divine kind. From the outset there was in contemplation the "becoming" of man like unto the Divine "Us." And when sin arrested our normal development, by the supernatural intervention of Divine Grace this possibility was restored to us. We may again receive the adoption of sons into the Divine Family, when Father and children will be of a homogeneous nature; we may be born again, not of corruptible but incorruptible seed, and thereby repossess the Divine affinities. We, who are originally partakers of human nature, are capable of being made "partakers of the Divine nature." The three doctrines of Incarnation, Adoption, and Regeneration are founded on the Mosaic doctrine of the creation of man in the Divine image. This latter it is that makes the former possible. So closely connected

are the beginning and the end of the Bible that, if the Mosaic doctrine of man's origin and nature is denied, the superstructure of Christian doctrine at once topples to the ground.

The infidel taunt that Holy Writ depicts human nature in colours too dark possesses no truth. In one sense, it does delineate fallen humanity in language strong and awful, variegated by the luridness of hell-fire ; but that is because it shows it in the past created higher than philosophy or science, or even poetry, ever dreamed, and because it exhibits it capable of restoration in the future to a higher altitude than ever before. The Bible magnifies human nature, and reveals to us the infinite possibilities therein concealed. Ask ancient philosophy, What is the origin of man? Greece answers, He grew from the ground like mushrooms in the fields of Attica. Egypt replies, He developed from the fertilising mud of the Nile, shone upon by the kindling rays of the sun. "According to the ideas commonly prevailing among the peoples of antiquity, man is regarded as autochthonous, or issued from the earth which bears him."¹ Ask modern science, What is the origin of man? She answers, He has unfolded from the ape, and the ape ultimately from the primeval slime in the bottom of the pool. Ask Moses, What is the origin of man? And he answers in language lofty and clear, "God created man in His own image ; in the image of God created He him." The sublimity of the answer is a presumptive evidence of its truth.

¹ Lenormant, *Beginnings of History*, p. 47.

CHAPTER III

CREATION AND ASTRONOMY

EARLY in the fifteenth century the ecclesiastical authorities put themselves in opposition to the modern science of astronomy. Down to that time theology and astronomy were like twin sisters, dwelling together in peace. But in consequence of the sudden development at that period of astronomic science, the theologians were left behind. The Bible doubtless contains passages which popularly describe the earth as fixed and the sun as revolving: "The sun was risen upon the earth." "His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it." "The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose." Another verse which did much militant service at that time was the following: "The world is established, it cannot be moved." "The world cannot be moved," said the Psalmist. "The world cannot move," said the theologians—a very different thing. However great the storms beating upon it, however furious the fire raging within it, the earth will not totter or stagger, says the Psalmist, its stability is assured. To that teaching science can offer no objection. But the theologians, mistaking popular

language for scientific statements, marshalled these verses in battle array, and with them combated the new theory that the sun, not the earth, is the fixed centre of the solar system.

How far the Roman Church still adheres to the old dogma of the immobility of the earth I am not able to tell. But it is significant that as late as 1823, in the preface to a new edition of Newton's *Principia*, the two learned editors, Le Sueur and Jacquier, both of them Jesuit priests, felt obliged to give the following cautionary notice: "Newton, in his third book, adopts the hypothesis of the motion of the earth. We could not explain his propositions without making the same hypothesis. Hence we are compelled to assume a character different from our own, for we profess obedience to the decrees promulgated by the Pope against the motion of the earth." But be the position of the Roman Church what it may, Protestant theologians adopted, as usual, the new Copernican theory as soon as its truth was scientifically established.

It was not the theologians only who were left behind by the rapid strides made in the memorable discoveries of Galileo, Kepler, and Copernicus; but the compact body of the so-called philosophers found themselves in the same unhappy predicament—a truth conveniently forgotten to the disparagement of the theologians. In the philosophy of the age the earth was viewed as the centre of the solar system. The supposed Mosaic teaching was abundantly confirmed by the Ptolemaic theory, of which all the philosophers from time immemorial were

devoted adherents. The immovableness of the earth was a leading theme in the Aristotelian philosophy ; and, in the Middle Ages, Aristotle was not only king, but tyrant, over men's minds. When Galileo ventured to teach the motion of the earth, the ire of the ecclesiastics was straightway roused ; but behind and beneath the hostility of the theologians, and explaining it, was the bitter antagonism of the philosophers, whose faith in Aristotle was more implicit than in Moses. Theology has had to bear the brunt of the obloquy connected with the persecution of the above astronomers ; but a deeper examination of the subject will convince us that the responsibility should be divided between theology and philosophy—the Aristotelian philosophy then ascendant in Europe. Philosophers never tire of pouring contempt on the persecutors of those grand and noble men ; but who were the persecutors ? Not those who sat in Moses' seat more than those who sat in Aristotle's chair. Theology was a helpless captive, bound hand and foot to the Aristotelian philosophy. Far be it from me to hold the theologians guiltless ; but let the blame be justly distributed.

“The complaint of science is that theology has resisted her progress. Ought not the accusation to be shifted, if not retorted ? Is it not theology that has been unfortunately encumbered with physical science, or with the philosophemes which stood for science at some particular period ? Interpreters of Scripture have allowed the prevailing theories of their own day so to colour their statement of Bible doctrine, that natural discoverers of the

next age have raised the cry, 'The Bible with its theology stops the way':—the fact being that it was not the Bible at all, nor even theology, which opposed itself to their discoveries, but only the ghosts of defunct philosophical or scientific opinions, clothing themselves in the garments of religious thought."¹

In every age, the foremost to admit the superiority of the Bible, and to bow down in humble adoration to the great God, the Maker of heaven and earth, have been the illustrious astronomers. What grander and more inspiring than the ever-memorable words of Kepler, with which he concludes his book on the *Harmony of Worlds*?—"I thank Thee, my Creator and Lord, that Thou hast given me this joy in Thy creation, this delight in the work of Thy hands. I have shown the excellency of Thy work unto men, so far as my finite mind was able to comprehend Thine infinity. If I ever said aught unworthy of Thee, or aught in which I may have sought my own glory, graciously forgive it." Of our own Newton it is also recorded that he never mentioned the name of God without reverently uncovering his head. Real greatness is never dissociated from true reverence. But this science of astronomy, so calculated by the boundless visions it discloses to humble the pride of man, and to excite wonderment and praise, is converted, by men more distinguished for acuteness than loftiness of mind, into a weapon wherewith to attack the Bible and undermine the religion founded thereon.

I. The first class of objections urged against the

¹ Laidlaw, *Doctrine of Man*, pp. 7, 8.

Mosaic narrative of creation are based on a misapprehension of the true signification of words. Because of the occurrence of the word "firmament" in the English translation, much ridicule has been poured on the devoted head of Moses, especially by the mob-orators of popular infidelity, the orators forgetting that Moses neither spoke in English nor wrote in Latin. *Rakia*, the word used by Moses, is one of the most appropriate terms possible. The Authorised Version reads "firmament," but the marginal reading is "expansion," which more nearly approximates the original. The verb *raka* signifies to expand by beating, whether it be with the hand or with an instrument. Hence the word lends itself easily to descriptive poetry: "Hast thou then with Him spread—*hammered*—out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass?" (Job xxxvii. 18). To set forth the appearance of the sky Moses employs the fittest word possible. Though not scientifically accurate, it is characterised by poetic truth. Throw yourselves back to the time of your childhood, when strange stirrings of soul began to ruffle the surface of your being, and did you not imagine the firmament as a thin plate of molten mirror, curved like a canopy over our world? The word evidently signifies expansion, tenuity. But in the Septuagint it is translated *στερέωμα*, and in the Vulgate "firmamentum," both expressing solidity, in accordance with the conceptions prevailing in those times.

If it be objected that the Mosaic term does not perfectly accord with scientific truth, a sufficient answer is that Moses described the phenomenon as

it appeared to the seeing eye. The same objection might be raised against kindred terms in every language. When the Romans spoke of "cælum," did they intend a "hollow" or curve scooped out of solid space? When the Greeks spoke of οὐρανός, did they simply mean a high or exalted place, according to the etymological derivation of the word? When the English write of "heaven," do they mean that the sky was heaved up by mechanical or other forces? When the Germans speak of "himmel," from *heimeln*, to cover, do they think of a roof to keep out the wet from the *heim* or home of man? Technically it may be shown that each of these words contains an error; practically each is true, the aptest term possible to set forth the facts as they appear to the poetic eye; and in childhood, whether of the individual or the race, every eye is poetic.

Another objection is founded on the Mosaic statement that light was created before the appearing of the sun, light being produced on the first day, whereas the sun and moon are expressly stated to have been "made" on the fourth. This objection has, in by-gone years, been urged with great merriment by infidel scoffers to the supposed discomfiture of Moses. "How did God create the light before the sun?" sceptically queried Voltaire. In the well-known volume *Essays and Reviews*, this argument was invested with the dignity of a deliberate philosophic statement. In the then state of scientific knowledge, it drove the orthodox theologians hard, who could only attempt a refutation, in a vague way, by alleging that God on the first day created light in a state of

diffusion, but on the fourth gathered it all together, and focussed it in one central orb—a good refutation enough if proofs were forthcoming. Since then, however, science itself has rallied to the help of faith, and demonstrated the existence of other sources of light than the sun. “Thus, at last,” writes Professor Dana, “we learn, through modern scientific research, that the appearance of light on the first day, and of the sun on the fourth—an idea foreign to man’s unaided conception—is as much in the volume of Nature as in that of Sacred Writ.” “The scientific hypothesis,” writes Professor Young, “that light is supplied by the emission of luminous particles has now been abandoned—of physical necessity abandoned; it is acknowledged by modern philosophers to be erroneous, and that there is no emission of such particles at all; but, on the contrary, the light of day is the result of undulations of a subtile fluid quite distinct from the sun; and but for the presence of this fluid there would be no light, whether the sun existed or not.” So, instead of the light being dependent on the sun, the sun is dependent on the light!

Whatever be the ultimate fate of the undulatory theory of light, enough at all events has been established to redeem the Mosaic affirmation of the existence of light before the sun from all aspersions of ridicule or foolhardiness. The crux of the difficulty here is that, whilst Moses knew, as well as everybody else, that the light now flows to our earth from the sun, he yet deliberately taught the existence of light millions of years antecedent to the appearance of the sun. Was not that unaccountably strange in

a man of ordinary common sense, which at least he was, his most rancorous critics being judges? Yes, unaccountable, except on the one hypothesis of his inspiration; and if he begin at this lofty altitude, the probability is that he will maintain the same high level throughout. What used to be a laughing-stock to rationalists is now converted by science itself into a cogent proof in favour of the supernatural origin of the Mosaic account.

Another disagreement, pithily put, and obviously endorsed, by Dr. Dods' is this: "Of a creation of sun, moon, and stars subsequent to the creation of the earth, science can have but one thing to say."¹ And that one thing, of course, is in antagonism to Moses. But who teaches the creation of the stellar worlds in the order set down by Dr. Dods? If the ripe and scholarly judgment of the great commentators counts for anything, not Moses. The only writers who endeavour to rivet this signification on him are the rationalists in theology and science, who, amid a multitude of divergent views, agree only in their desire to explain away the supernatural. Why turn the ear to the charming of rationalists, whilst deaf to the "concord of sweet sounds" emitted by the great theologians of the century? Why side on minor points with authors whose avowed principle is the suppression of the supernatural, against the weighty judgments of commentators like Delitzsch, Lange, and Keil, who have, with microscopic minuteness, examined the whole subject?

The teaching of Moses seems perfectly clear and straightforward: "In the beginning God created the

¹ *Genesis*, p. 4

heavens and the earth." All the worlds, in their constituent materials, were ushered into existence the same time ; the earth and sun and moon and stars were all *created* in the beginning, whether in one whirling mass, as Laplace taught, or as separate entities, the narrative does not say. The *how* of creation is left to science, the *what* and the *wherefore* belong to theology. All things having been thus produced in a weltering, undigested mass, the work of differentiation and arrangement began, till in the fourth day the process of development is sufficiently advanced and the aërial space between is sufficiently cleared of clouds and mist, for the celestial luminaries to shine on the earth, and be signs to men by which to regulate their going out and their coming in. The sun, like the earth and the planets, was at first one chaotic fluid mass, opaque, non-luminous, and probably enveloped in darkness. Parallel with the preparation of the earth to receive animal and human life was the preparation of the sun and moon to be, not lights, but light-bearers, as the original word signifies, till on the fourth day they appeared, not only in a cosmical, but in an intelligible, useful relation to one another. It is possible that then light was placed in the light-bearers, becoming visible on the earth, and thereby regulating seasons and years and days. Moses does not say they were *created* on the fourth day, only *made*—ordained finally to the performance of their functions in their relation to this world and its inhabitants.

II. The next argument against the Christian doctrine of Creation is based on the comparative insignificance of our earth.

Taking a larger sweep, and commanding deeper respect, it needs to be examined in a truly reverent spirit. Whereas Moses gives a whole chapter to the earth, he only gives one sentence to the stars. This, remark unbelievers, gives the earth more importance in the Scriptures than belongs to it in the universe; and in the volume of Revelation the earth should occupy the same relative significance as it does in the volume of Nature. In the two books, by the same Author, the emphasis should fall in the same place. To this argument new momentum was imparted by the wonderful discoveries which necessarily followed the invention of the telescope. The whole expanse of limitless space was proved to be studded with millions of stars, each immeasurably larger than our poor earth. Compared to the vastness of creation, our planet is only as a leaf in the primeval forest, a grain of sand among the countless myriads on the seashore. Is it likely, then, that the Divine Being, who created all, and whose relation to the countless worlds of the far-off Milky Way is as close and intimate as to our toy-planet—is it likely that He would give so much prominence to the least in the realm of nature, as to make it the centre of His eternal thoughts, and the scene of the tragic revelation of Himself in His Son? Is it reasonable to conceive that the Almighty would concentrate His thought and affection on this speck of a world, this infinitesimal dot in the immensity of space, as Moses leads us to expect, and the New Testament leads us to believe? Why should He, seeing He is Creator of all worlds alike, and is as closely related to the one as to the other?

The whole argument, if argument it may be called, proceeds on a false principle, a wrong view of the earth, of man, and of God.

First, it implies an unsatisfactory view of the earth. Indeed, modern astronomy here comes to the aid of faith, for it inclines more and more to the opinion that our earth is really the absolute centre of the universe, probably the only world which is now or has ever been inhabited. So far as science can judge, the other worlds are in the process of being made, not "finished," as Moses declares our earth to be, and therefore not yet inhabited. In development our world is in advance of all others, the only one now fit for occupancy by physically organised beings. Of course, I believe in spiritual existences called angels, but spiritual beings do not require material abodes. If, then, our world be the only one hitherto peopled, the Mosaic view of the world as "geocentric" harmonises with the deepest truth of creation. Great names can, I am aware, be adduced as firm believers that other worlds than ours are inhabited. That intelligent creatures occupy the stars was a favourite hypothesis of Kant, in defence of which he was willing to risk much; but evidence he had none, and that evidence is still lacking. According to Professor Ball, than whom a higher authority on astronomy our country does not boast, only Mars possesses the conditions necessary to life, and even of Mars he entertains doubts.¹

The assertion that it is incredible that God should have created numberless worlds, and then leave them unoccupied, mere desolate wastes in infinite

¹ *Story of the Heavens*, p. 190.

space, is more rhetorical than scientific, more imposing to the imagination than convincing to reason. The force of this astronomical appeal to the imagination was broken by Whewell, when he confronted it with the well-established facts of geology that millions of years were allowed to pass before this world was tenanted, the illimitable in unpopulated time neutralising the force of the argument from the illimitable in unpopulated space. And, as already intimated, so far as science goes, it rather inclines to the conclusion that the other worlds of our solar system, at least, have not yet reached that stage in their development which would make life on them possible or tolerable.

Second, this reasoning, even if it be true, suffices not to still all the questionings of the soul; our inquiry must be further pursued. Mind is of greater moment than matter; and here, perhaps, the true solution is to be found. Though physically not measuring two yards long, man, in virtue of his mind, is of more importance than a whole universe of dead matter. Quality here overbalances quantity; or, rather, there is no balance at all—no conceivable comparison between greatness and size, between mind and matter, between ethics and physics, between will and avoirdupois weight. "Man," says Pascal, "is a feeble reed, trembling in the midst of creation; but then he is endowed with thought. It does not need the universe to arm for his destruction. A breath of wind, a drop of water, will suffice to kill him. But though the universe were to fall on man and crush him, he would be greater in his death than the universe in its victory; for he

would be conscious of his defeat, and it would not be conscious of its triumph." Human intelligence it is that gives dignity to the earth, and lends weight to the "geocentric" doctrine of Moses and the Bible. It is not on the littleness of the earth, but on the greatness of man, that the Bible enlarges with never-tiring reiteration. Does not the supposition underlie the whole fabric of Divine revelation that man is potentially the grandest creature God has formed? We are accustomed to hear the angels portrayed as nobler and greater than he. In certain aspects such descriptions are true; but there is another and a more permanent sense in which man is greater and nobler than they.

At his start man is lower; but in the course of his development he passes the angel, and achieves a height beyond the angel's reach. Man has folded in his nature possibilities of growth beyond the angelic nature. That God created man in His image, after His likeness, is the Mosaic teaching—an affirmation nowhere made of any other intelligence. The angel is, of course, a rational being; but the creation of man involved certain peculiar characteristics which bring him nearer God, qualifying him to be considered, in a distinctive sense, the offspring of God. This consideration breaks the force of the argument from the magnitude of the visible universe. Under the shelter of its wings the Psalmist found relief: "When I consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him?" In these verses he compares the

physical universe with physical man, and the overwhelming disproportion makes his faith stagger. Where does he find relief? In the contemplation of man as a moral intelligence. "Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels"—but only for a little while, for in God's plan concerning him he is destined to enjoy honour and glory beyond seraphim and cherubim. "Thou hast put all things under his feet," and if all things, then the angels are in subjection to him. (Ps. viii. compared with Heb. ii. 8, 9.)

That the Mosaic view of the importance of this world and of man, in the first chapter of Genesis, is compatible with the dignity conferred on them in the New Testament, by the incarnation of God, must be patent to all. The right keynote is struck, and that of itself is surprising. That Moses should so describe the earth as to prepare the mind naturally to accept it as the suitable platform for God to be made manifest on it in the flesh is in itself calculated to excite wonderment. How came about this unexpected harmony between the beginning of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New? between the Mosaic doctrine of Creation and the Johannine doctrine of Incarnation? Apart from supernatural interposition, no adequate explanation is forthcoming.

Third, the argument, founded on the physical insignificance of the earth, implies wrong views of God, picturing Him as an Oriental monarch, invested with infinite physical attributes, whilst destitute of moral character. The Bible, however, delineates God, not simply concerned about the vast and bulky,

but as equally interested in the little and lowly, decorating the grass and watching the sparrows. Compatible with this Scriptural teaching, whilst the invention of the telescope led to an enlargement of our knowledge concerning suns and constellations, the simultaneous invention of the microscope opened up to our astonished vision a new world in the dust under our feet. The discovery of the infinitely great encounters the discovery of the infinitely little ; and, by counterbalance, they keep the mind in due equipoise. God is as watchful of the animalculæ in a drop of water as He is careful of the galaxies in the ocean of space.

More : it is a principle in the Kingdom of Heaven, "that the last shall be first, and the first last." "God chooseth the foolish to confound the wise, the weak things to confound the things which are mighty, and base things, and things which are despised, to bring to nought things that are : that no flesh should glory in His presence." "And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda ; for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule My people Israel." Is it not in consonance with these principles of the Divine procedure to elect our earth, one of the smallest among the thousands of creation, the Bethlehem of the universe, to be the scene of the grandest revelations of Himself ? History conveys to us the lesson that greatness and size seldom go together. China is a large country measured by superficial acreage, and the number of its people equals the population of Europe ; yet she cannot be considered truly great—so far she has left no deep mark on the religion, the intellect, or the commerce

of the world. Think again of Assyria, a country measuring its thousands of miles square, and reckoning its soldiers and camels by hundreds of thousands; but what addition did she make to the mental and moral wealth of the globe? On the other hand, a country may be small, estimated by its surface mileage, and its inhabitants few compared with other nations, and yet reach the sublimest heights in knowledge and virtue. Palestine was no greater than Wales in surface dimensions, but it achieved greatness which for ever eclipses countries a hundred times its size. The Hebrew race, notwithstanding its arithmetical insignificance, left its mark deeper on the religion and morality of the world than any other people. Greece also, judged by its geographical extent, was only one of the "small dust of the balance," and Athens was not larger than one of our Welsh towns. But what country grew more heroic men? What city reared men of greater eminence in poetry, philosophy, eloquence, and art? Without contradiction, size is not greatness. And if, in the Divine scheme of the universe, our earth holds a position unique in its moral grandeur out of proportion to its material measurement, it is only in unison with the general course of history.

Besides, is it not probable that our world alone fell from its allegiance to the Creator, and violated the moral order of the universe? If that be the case, it alone is a sufficient clue to the difficulty that God chose to become incarnate in our world, and not in one of the fixed stars a thousand times its size. Christian instinct, rather than Christian exegesis, has always persisted in interpreting the

Parable of the Lost Sheep in that light. "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulder rejoicing; and when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost" (Luke xv. 4-6). If, then, the need for redemption was confined to this one lost world, the necessity for Incarnation and Sacrifice would be likewise limited thereto.

Or, to present the same truth in another way, if rebellion had broken out only in this province of the creation, the call for Divine intervention to stamp out the insurrection would also be restricted to it. "If, on the one hand," Dr. Chalmers says, "God be jealous of His honour, and, on the other, there be proud and exalted spirits, who scowl defiance at Him and at His monarchy, then let the material prize of victory be insignificant as it may, it is the victory in itself which upholds the impulse of the keen and stimulated rivalry. If, by the sagacity of one infernal mind, a single planet has been seduced from its allegiance, and brought under the ascendancy of him who, in the Scriptures, is called the god of this world; and if the errand on which the Redeemer came was to destroy the works of the devil, then let this planet have all the littleness which astronomy has assigned to it—call it what it is, one of the smaller islets which float on the ocean of immensity—it has become the theatre of such a competition as may have all the desires and all the

energies of a divided universe embarked upon it. It involves in it other objects than the single recovery of our species. It decides higher questions—it stands linked with the supremacy of God. . . . To an infidel ear, all this may carry the sound of something wild and visionary along with it; but, though only known through the medium of revelation, after it is known, who can fail to recognise its harmony with the great lineaments of human experience? Who does not recognise in these facts much that goes to explain why our planet has taken so conspicuous a position in the foreground of history?"¹

This prominence given our world in the dramas of Creation and Redemption is not for our sakes only, but for the sake of all intelligences, of every rank and degree, throughout the whole universe; "that, through the Church, might be known, to the principalities and powers, the manifold wisdom of God." Thus, again, we revert to the statement that our world is, and will for ever be, the centre of interest to the intelligent universe. Here are solved the deepest problems of mind and morality. We are, therefore, prepared for the frequent intimations scattered throughout the pages of the New Testament, that the Incarnate God will return in glory to the scene of His humiliation and death, and reign here in majesty world without end, making it the veritable centre of glory and influence; thereby realising the seer's vision of a throne with a Lamb upon it, as if He had been slain, compassed about in close proximity by the redeemed of men, and

¹ *Astronomical Discourses*, vi.

at farther distances by other moral intelligences. The end comports with the beginning. How came Moses to give such a theory of the creation of the world and of man as to be universally felt to be the appropriate commencement to a history which has so glorious a termination, unless it were true? And if true, how came he to discover it at so early a period? It was not the discovery of Moses, but the revelation of God, either to him or to the first fathers of the race.

CHAPTER IV

CREATION AND EVOLUTION

IN the first chapter of Genesis, three different words are employed by Moses to set forth the creative operations of God—"create," "make," "form" (*bara, asa, yatsar*). Of these the word "create" is the strongest, denoting the supernatural exertion of Divine Power without the agency of secondary causes. God is the cause, the only adequate cause. The other words are of weaker signification, and denote the working of God, the great First Cause, along the line of secondary causes.

In looking over this chapter we are particularly struck with the judicious use made of these words. The word "create" is used in three connections, and where we find it the other words would apparently be inappropriate. The first time is in the first verse: "In the beginning God *created* the heaven and the earth." Here it means the origination of matter out of nothing. In this first act God was the alone cause, to the total exclusion of all secondary causes, for these latter were not yet in existence. The second time is in ver. 21: "And God *created* great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind,

and every winged fowl after his kind." Here it is applied to the first production of animal life. In this work also God was the only adequate cause. Secondary causes may have been utilised to the extent to which they would go; but there was a point beyond which their influence could not reach—they could not by any possibility of combination produce life. "Spontaneous generation" is an exploded doctrine. The third time the word "create" is used is in ver. 27: "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him." Here it signifies the generation of mind. Secondary causes were already at work in all the creation, the laws of nature in full swing; but there was a limit to their influence, beyond which they could not travel—they could not produce mind.

Here then we find the writer of Genesis using the word which denotes the direct, immediate, supernatural operation of God only three times, in the creation of matter, the origination of life, and the production of mind—the three places where the line of continuity in modern evolutionary science breaks, the three places where the exponents of Materialism cannot find the connecting links. Just there, where the links are missing, the author of Genesis puts God. Is not this coincidence strange? Is it designed or undesigned? Either way it excites surprise. That Moses had the remotest conception of the modern theory of evolution is, of course, absurd. How then account for this singular correspondence? Must we not suppose a Mind, behind the writer's, controlling the latter, and moulding unconsciously from within his thoughts into suitable expressions? This three-

fold recurrence of the word "create" will form the basis of my present remarks.

I. *The Creation of Matter.*—The word "create" (*bara*) is of prime importance, being one of the key-words of Biblical theology. What then is its precise signification? Etymologically it is believed by the best scholarship to mean "cut," "carve," "polish." But, as with all historic words, its precise import is determined, not by derivation, but by usage and the general tenor of the context. This word "*bara*," in Kal, is strictly applied to the Supreme Being, never to men; and to Him, not in His natural, but supernatural, operations. "The word denotes," says Professor Tayler Lewis, "as its most usual sense, a Divine, supernatural act, such as man or nature of itself could not do. . . . It is the Divine, supernatural making of something new, and which did not exist before." "*Bara* is never used except of a Divine act," writes Bishop Perowne, himself an authority of no mean order; "and it is quite certain that the writer intends to convey the impression of a creation called into existence out of nothing by the voice and will of God." "In the trite dispute of interpreters and theologians," writes Gesenius,¹ "concerning creation out of nothing, some appeal to the word under consideration [*bara*], as if it might be gathered from its very etymology and proper signification that the first chapter of Genesis teaches not a creation from nothing, but a conformation of matter eternally existing. On the contrary, from the instances we have given, it will abundantly appear that the actual use of this word in Kal

¹ *Thesaur. Heb.*, p. 236.

is altogether different from its primary signification, and that it is rather employed with respect to the new production of a thing (see Gen. ii. 3) than to the conformation and elaboration of material. That the opening clause of Genesis sets forth the world as first created out of nothing, and in a rude and undigestible state, while the remainder of the first chapter exhibits the elaboration of the recently created mass, the connection of the whole paragraph renders entirely plain."

Let it not, however, be supposed that the Mosaic doctrine of creation out of nothing militates against the philosophical maxim, Out of nothing nothing can come (*Ex nihilo nihil fit*). This dictum, properly interpreted, is only an affirmation in a proverbial form of the principle of causality, that without cause there can issue no effect. Nothing has power to originate nothing. Nothing can do nothing. And if, prior to the beginning, nothing existed, the universe would have been a sheer impossibility. But, according to Moses, God existed, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient; He is an adequate cause—He, out of nothing, created the worlds. Whereas the heathen gods are represented as working with fuss and strain, the God of the Pentateuch "created the heavens and the earth" without any effort or the slightest tax on His strength. As the verb in Kal denotes, He performed the creative work with ease.

This truth, that the act of creation implies not a new collocation or reconstruction of matter, but its absolute origination, may appear to us trite and commonplace. But who made it the common

heritage of Christian nations? When it was first proclaimed, it was novel, startling, revolutionary. None of the sublimest thinkers of antiquity, outside the magic circle of Revelation, ever conceived it. Modern Materialism, as represented by Tyndall, Huxley, and Haeckel, affirms the eternity of matter. Ancient Idealism, as embodied in Plato, who combined in himself the gorgeous splendour of the poet with the keen penetration of the philosopher, made the same affirmation. Thus in their confession of faith modern Materialism and ancient Idealism have one article in common—the self-existence, and therefore the eternity of matter. To Plato God was only the Architect of the universe, having the rough material thereof ready-made to His hands; only the Arranger of the unshaped hyle (*ἄσχητη ἄμορφος*), the hyle itself being the dark underground of the world.

Moses, however, with eyes keener and pinions stronger, penetrates farther, and is, so far as history testifies, the author of the renowned dogma of absolute creation. How came Moses to give to thoughts, which “eye had not seen, nor ear heard, nor had entered into the heart of man to conceive,” such dignified utterance? How came he to soar so high, to fly so far? To me there is but one answer—the Divine Wind was blowing under his pinions, carrying him beyond the region where created zephyrs blow. The Divine Afflatus was filling his soul, conveying him beyond the farthest boundaries of mere human genius. Deny his inspiration, and his writings become the greatest puzzle of literature. Deny, with some modern scientific

infidels, the truth of the Mosaic doctrine of the genesis of matter, the problem still confronts you, How to account for the genesis of the doctrine?

That the origin of matter is a subject lying outside the province of human science has just been intimated. The act of creation took place but once, has not been repeated, and is therefore beyond the reach of observation and experiment. The postulate of Science, the assumption with which she begins her researches, is not the creation, but the existence, of matter. Accordingly Science may tell of matter since the beginning; she has not a syllable to say of it in the beginning. "The idea of creation belongs to religion, and not to natural science. The latter may, indeed, give us information concerning its external history; but it is not science, but religion, which must teach us the fact that God created the world. Of this fact Science from her own resources is able to tell us nothing. For, however far she may travel backwards, and pursue her investigations of the origin of all things, she is at last arrested by matter, by life, and by law. Whence this matter, the life that animates, the law that governs, it? Science is utterly unable to inform us. For she always presupposes the existence of matter, and all her labours begin therefrom. The question concerning the origin of matter, leaving the region of sensible reality, passes into that of speculation or of faith. At this point, then, natural science ceases to be natural science, and becomes either philosophy or religion."¹ Consequently, in the presence of this problem, Science is dumb. Dumb, did I say? Far

¹ Luthardt, *Fundamental Truths*, pp. 72, 73.

from observing silence on a question concerning which in the nature of things she is not competent to pronounce judgment, she makes here more din and clamour than usual. The less she knows the louder she asserts. What Tyndall, Huxley, and Spencer have to say touching the doctrine of origins are not scientific verities, but metaphysical hypotheses, and their dissertations should be so considered. They are not verified demonstrations, but daring speculations, the brilliant dreams of able men, bred from despair of arriving at a satisfactory solution, but dreams nevertheless. It may be objected that neither can the doctrine of creation as promulgated by Moses be scientifically verified, that it also is a dream. Assuredly, yes ; but compare the dreams ! The dreams of materialists, ancient and modern, are inconsistent, illogical, self-contradictory, explaining nothing, leading nowhither, and are unutterably depressing. But the dream of Moses is simple, harmonious, sublime, elevating, inspiring, explains the universe, and turns the key in the lock of creation. The conviction is secretly engendered that the dream and the facts correspond. Some dreams are truly Divine !

“The aim and effort of science,” declares Tyndall, “is to explain the unknown in the terms of the known.”¹ Doubtless a most worthy aim. “The whole process of evolution,” again proclaims this eloquent child of Science, “is the manifestation of a Power absolutely inscrutable to the intellect of man” ; “it is by the operation of an insoluble mystery that life on earth is evolved.” “A Power

¹ *Fragments of Science*, vol. ii., p. 356.

absolutely inscrutable!" "A mystery," that is not only unsolved, but "insoluble"! Is not this the language of despair? Is not this impossibility of knowledge depressing to body and mind? Cannot Science explain the Unknown in the terms of the known? Has Science, too, swollen with pride and vainglory, to put her finger on her lip in presence of the problem of the origin of things? All honour to this illustrious child of hers for the courage to make the honest, frank, though humiliating confession. That is what theologians have consistently maintained all along, that the doctrine of origins belongs, not to science, but to religion. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3). "In the beginning——," says Science. Its votaries may exercise their ingenuity in inventing for the blank a name; they may call it a "Power absolutely inscrutable," "a mystery that is insoluble"; but the appellation only emphasises the ignorance. Take Moses' solution of the same problem: "In the beginning God!" Suddenly athwart the millenniums there shoots a stream of white light. But God also is a mystery, you say. Yes; a mystery of light, not a mystery of darkness; and if we only give Moses time, he will tell us who and what this God is. Though unknown, He is not unknowable; though mysterious, He is not insoluble. Though no man can find Him out to perfection, yet every man can know Him as his God and Father in Jesus Christ. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "He spoke, and it was done; He com-

manded, and it stood fast." "He called the stars by name," and out they trooped, a white obedient flock. Nature is based on the supernatural.

II. *The Creation of Life*.—One characteristic feature of this chapter strikes us at once: that the six creation days are divided into two threes—the first three giving an account of inorganic, the second three of organic, nature. But the last work of the first three seems to stretch out and up, to bridge as nearly as possible the chasm between the two cycles. They may be presented to the eye thus:

I. *The Inorganic Era.*

1st day. Light cosmical.

2nd day. Earth divided from the fluid around it.

3rd day. { 1. Outlining of land and water.
2. Creation of vegetation.

II. *The Organic Era.*

4th day. Light, from the sun.

5th day. Creation of the lower animals.

6th day. { 1. Creation of mammals.
2. Creation of man.

Not only is the analogy patent between the first and fourth day, the second and fifth, the third and sixth, but the work of each day seems to extend as nearly as possible to the work of the succeeding day. The eras partly overlap. Still, to make the hands clasp the intervention of God was necessary.

According to Moses, in the production of animal life God intervenes directly and immediately. The

Primary Cause is here at work, not possibly to the total exclusion of secondary causes, but in order to supplement their defect, and carry them beyond their natural limits. The materials at hand God utilised, and gave nature a lift to a higher level than it could in its own energies attain to. The production of animal life is the result of the direct supernatural intervention of God. God *created*. Here arises the question, How did He create animal life? At one time Professor Huxley believed that the potency of all life lay enveloped in the slime in the bottom of the ocean, to which he gave the high-sounding name "Bathybius." Bathybius, however, nowhere existed except in the imagination of the able thinker who gave it a name. Some of us remember following, a quarter of a century ago, with considerable interest, the lively controversy then waging between Dr. Bastian on the one hand and Professors Tyndall and Huxley on the other concerning the "spontaneous generation" of life. How did the controversy end? In the firmer establishment of the principle that out of the non-living life never emerges. But life is in the world—how came it? Moses answers, By the direct interposition of God. He traces life to the supernatural. According to him, life is something new, which entered the creation long after its start—not as the accidental result of the fermentation of chemical elements or the conjunction of mechanical laws, but as the consequence of the immediate energising of the Divine Power.

The supernatural origin of life granted, again comes the question, How? As a protoplasm or

an organism? Did the egg exist before the hen, or the hen before the egg? Did the cell precede the animal, or the animal the cell? Evolutionism, of course, favours the precedence of the cell, the egg, the plasm. On this supposition the whole theory is based. But, so far as I can see, Moses favours the alternative view, that the organism is the fontal source of the seed: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the first tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." "And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good." "And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and it was so." To practical reason it certainly looks more likely that the hen laid the egg than that the egg, without the conditions requisite to fructification and incubation, should evolve the hen.

We would do well here to ponder the weighty words of Lord Salisbury, deliberately delivered by him as the President of the British Association of Science at the annual meeting at Oxford. He was speaking from abundant knowledge, and in the presence of the leading exponents of the evolution theory. After frankly conceding to Darwinism "that few are now found to doubt that animals separated by differences far exceeding those that distinguish what we know as species, have yet descended from common ancestors," the learned

Marquess proceeds : " There is much less agreement as to the extent to which this common descent can be assumed, or the process by which it has come about. Darwin himself believed that all animals were descended from 'at most four or five progenitors,' adding that 'there was grandeur in the view that life had been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or one.' Some of his more devoted followers, like Professor Haeckel, were prepared to go a step further, and to contemplate primitive mud as the probable ancestor of the whole *fauna* and *flora* of this planet. To this extent the Darwinian theory has not effected the conquest of scientific opinion ; and still less is there any unanimity in the acceptance of natural selection as the sole, or even the main, agent of whatever modifications may have led up to the existing forms of life. The deepest obscurity still hangs over the origin of the infinite variety of life. Two of the strongest objections to the Darwinian explanation appear still to retain their force."

Lord Salisbury continues : " Lord Kelvin was the first to point out that the amount of time required by the advocates of the theory for working out the processes they had imagined could not be conceded without assuming the existence of a totally different set of natural laws from those with which we are acquainted. His view was not only based on profound mechanical reasoning, but it was so plain that any layman could comprehend it. Setting aside arguments from the resistance of the tides, which may be taken to transcend the lay understanding, his argument from the refrigeration of the earth

requires little science to apprehend it. Everybody knows that hot things cool, and that according to their substance they take more or less time in cooling. It is evident from the increase of heat as we descend into the earth that the earth is cooling, and we know by experiment within certain wide limits the rate at which its substances, the matters of which it is constituted, are found to cool. It follows that we can approximately calculate how hot it was so many million years ago. But if at any time it was hotter at the surface by fifty degrees Fahrenheit than it is now, life would have been impossible upon the planet, and therefore we can without much difficulty fix a date before which organic life on earth cannot have existed. Basing himself on these considerations, Lord Kelvin limited the period of organic life upon the earth to one hundred million years ; and Professor Tait, in a still more penurious spirit, cut that hundred down to ten. But on the other side of the account stand the claims of the geologists and biologists. They have revelled in the prodigality of the ciphers which they put at the end of the earth's hypothetical life. Long cribbed and cabined within the narrow bounds of the popular chronology, they have exulted wantonly in their new freedom. They have lavished their millions of years with the open hand of a prodigal heir indemnifying himself by present extravagance for the enforced self-denial of his youth. But it cannot be gainsaid that their theories require at least all this elbow-room. If we think of that vast distance over which Darwin conducts us, from the jelly-fish lying on the primeval beach to man

as we know him now ; if we reflect that the prodigious change requisite to transform the one into the other is made up of a chain of generations, each advancing by a minute variation from the form of its predecessor ; and if we further reflect that these successive changes are so minute that in the course of our historic period—say three thousand years—this progressive variation has not advanced by a single step perceptible to our eyes, in respect to man or the animals and plants with which man is familiar, we shall admit that for a chain of change so vast, of which the smallest link is longer than our recorded history, the biologists are making no extravagant claim when they demand at least many hundred million years for the accomplishment of the stupendous process. Of course, if the mathematicians are right, the biologists cannot have what they demand. If for the purposes of their theory organic life must have existed on the globe more than one hundred million years ago, it must, under the temperature then prevailing, have existed in a state of vapour. The jelly-fish would have been dissipated in steam long before he had had a chance of displaying the advantageous variation which was to make him the ancestor of the human race.” According to the learned Marquess, “the laity may be excused for returning a verdict of ‘Not proven.’” If in their calculations Lord Kelvin and Professor Tait be right, where will Professor Drummond find room for his “Ascent of Man,” or rather his “Ascent of Woman”?

The Mosaic theology seems to teach further that God is not only the originator of the first

life, but also the chief cause of the different kinds of life which have subsequently appeared. The chief cause, not the sole. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb, and the fruit tree, *after his kind.*" "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly. And God created whales, and every living creature that moveth, *after their kind.*" "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature *after his kind*, and cattle *after their kind*: and it was so." These words seem to imply that God and Nature were working in partnership—not God without Nature, nor Nature without God. The vital forces of the world were guided, fortified, and supplemented by the Supreme Force. The theory that originally there was but one species or kind, out of which all other species or kinds were evolved, here meets with apparent opposition. Singular the emphasis laid by constant repetition in the above verses on the phrase "*after his kind.*" Materialistic scientists have expatiated much on the transmutation of species; but their finely woven guesses are pronounced by spiritualistic scientists—and they are a host—to be mere myths. Instead of the myths they destroy, materialists invent myths [of their own. "A most extensive series of observations has shown how groundless is the notion of *transmutations* of species; and notwithstanding the excitement caused by the Darwinian hypothesis with respect to the formation of species by natural processes, the most eminent men, such as Murchison, Agassiz, Owen, and others, have declared that there is no ground for presuming that species are transitory, while uniform experience

shows that the established course of nature is decisive against the confused mixture of hybrids, whether in plants or animals, which are not fertile with others, which cannot be perpetuated, and usually die out at the next gradation." Environments can bring about marvellous modifications, but they have never been known to transmute one species into another. Not a single specimen in the transition state has ever been discovered. When a new species appears, its organisation is always complete. A wolf may become a dog—environments may account for the change; but it is not known of either developing into a sheep. Art has evolved breeds; but the chasm between "breeds" and "species" is wide. These breeds, as Professor Le Conte, who worthily attempts to reconcile Christian faith with modern Evolutionism, testifies, when they escape the influence of human domestication, and are left without manipulation in the hands of nature, always revert to their original type. "*Natural selection compels reversion,*" writes the Professor in italics. Singular that he does not see that, in that fact, Nature proclaims herself an antagonist of transmutation, and when left to herself vigorously strives to obliterate all traces of the art of breeding. God has created plants, fishes, birds, animals, each "*after his kind*"; and the barrier between one kind and another no effort of man can break down. So far as Science has read the records of the past, not a single instance can she point out in which Nature has allowed the partition walls between the species to be impaired.

III. *Creation of Man.*—"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him."

What of the body of man? Is it the immediate creation of God out of the dust of the ground, or His mediate creation through animals which existed before him? A categorical answer is not returned; the phraseology is indefinite enough to admit of either method. Professor Drummond has a very striking title to one of his chapters—"The Scaffolding left in the Body." The author's skilful marshalling of admitted and well-known facts made on my mind a deep impression. From the likenesses he pictures between the human frame and the animal organism, he comes unhesitatingly to the conclusion that man is developed from the animal, the animal from the primeval ascidian. The argument from the successive transformations of the human embryo—a subject which requires the profoundest examination by Christian philosophers—has not yet been answered to my satisfaction.

But be that as it may, the direct or indirect formation of the body is left by Moses an open question. Wherein then does his teaching differ from modern evolutionary theories? In this,—that God acted directly, immediately, that is, supernaturally, in constituting man the thinking, moral creature that he to-day is. Nature did not evolve him; environments did not develop him; and certainly he did not make himself. That Nature, in accordance with the usual plan of creation, was being prepared for the advent of man, that in her last works animal life threw out its tendrils as near as possible to rational life, is readily acknowledged. But there was a limit beyond which secondary causes could not travel; here precisely

the Creative Power came in, and—man was fashioned, the image and likeness of the Creator. Man may, if the phrase be allowed, be a *supernatural* development from a prior animal ; he cannot be the product of *natural* evolution, and that for two reasons.

First, because in other apes, either in the historic or prehistoric periods, no tendency has been observed to transmute themselves into men. Is it not unaccountable, and therefore unbelievable, that millions upon millions of years ago there lived an ape, or perchance a pair, male and female, which passed the boundaries of animalhood and entered the territory of manhood, and that no ape ever since has crossed the frontier? Besides, the gap between the most advanced ape and the lowest developed man is too wide for Nature at one or two bounds to leap over. The largest gorilla brain is 34·5 cubic inches ; and, according to Professor Schaafhausen, the smallest human brain is 46 cubic inches. That Nature should at one bound advance from 34 inches to 46 is admittedly impossible. Therefore materialistic scientists have resort to the Missing Link. But how came the link to be missed, such a large link, and the link nearest to man too? Professor Haeckel, who has constituted himself the knight-errant of Materialism, answers by supposing a lost continent, Lemuria, submerged under the Indian Ocean ; and that, if we could only go down there, the Missing Link would be found ! How fruitful in suppositions materialistic science is ! This clever writer, who in intellectual grasp comes behind none of his school, is driven to imagine a continent, for

the existence of which not a tittle of proof is forthcoming, in order to support the evolution-thesis.

On the other hand, take the Biblical view, that God either directly formed a new creature out of pre-existent earthly materials, summarising in him all His preceding works, or that supernaturally He developed a preceding animal, be he ape or any other creature, into the corporeal stature and mental condition of man : is it not simpler, more credible, more reasonable? That creation on any theory is a mystery must be confessed ; but on the Scripture theory it is a mystery of light, whilst on the evolutionary theory it is a mystery of darkness. What the Biblical author lays stress on is,—that man is not the resultant of the operation of secondary causes, but is the immediate work of the First Cause.

But behind the body is the mind, the spirit that is in man. When I dwell inordinately on the meannesses and littlenesses of man, I feel no repugnance to the evolution theory—I am almost willing that man should be considered wholly the descendant of the brutes. But when I consider his moral magnanimity, witness his sorrow and repentance, hear his prayer and praise, I feel that there is something in man that is come down from heaven, something Divine in the breast of man that has descended straight from the bosom of God. Profound consciousness of this made the ancient thinkers of Greece pourtray Prometheus as stealing fire from heaven to kindle the spirit which is in man. Look in his eye, and you behold the sparkle and glow of the Divine Fire. What is deepest, and therefore

truest, in heathen consciousness finds both its explanation and expression in the Mosaic record. The superhuman is the deepest human. Plato is right in saying that in every man there is a beast; but equally true is it that within every breast dwells an angel, which battles with the beast to keep him in subjection. The beast within us—where did he come from? I almost think the evolutionists are right, that he came from the brutes of the primeval forest, and ultimately from the primeval slime in the bottom of the sea.

Eglur y dengys y dyn
O ba radd y b'o 'i wreiddyn.

But whence is the angel within us derived? Moses must be right when he teaches that he descended from God. Our highest nature is akin to the Divine. Let scientists theorise as they may, we feel that Moses has given the true philosophy of our origin. The evolutionists are possibly right in tracing a connection between our physical frame and the animal organisms—a connection, however, admitting, yea, demanding the direct intervention of the Creator. Moses is incontrovertibly right in tracing our moral nature to the skies, and beholding in it a mirror reflecting the Deity Himself. The beast and the angel, the animal and the Divine, both lodge in this breast of mine.

Here precisely comes in the possibility of the Fall. In reading Drummond's *Ascent of Man*, I could detect no possible place in his theory for man's fall, I could see no room in it for sin at all. It is ascent, ascent, without break, and with-

out retrogression, from plasm to animalism, from animalism to barbarous manhood, and from barbarous manhood to civilised communities. But how plausible soever the scheme appears on paper, how attractive soever the theory is made to look on his glowing pages, one grim fact confronts it from beginning to end—SIN. Evil is a fact. Wickedness is a terrible reality. No theory of the origin of man, however intellectually plausible, which provides no room for the origin of moral evil can recommend itself to the moral judgment. The Fall was not upward, but downward. Take Moses' account of the origin of the race, and the Fall becomes both possible and explicable. The triumph of the dragon in our nature over the angel, of the corporeal over the spiritual, of the lower nature over the higher—that, that is the Fall of man. The victory of bodily appetences over the dictates of conscience, the eating of the fruit contrary to the Divine injunction, constituted, according to Moses, our original Fall, and in the continued subjugation of the higher nature by the lower consists our present degradation. Verily the Mosaic theory comports well with the facts of consciousness. Man in his higher nature is the supernatural creation of God.

IV. To conclude this chapter without directing attention to another creation, later than that of Adam, and more marvellous, were hardly right—the PRODUCTION OF THE GOD-MAN. As the Old Testament begins with the creation of the First Adam, so the New commences with the generation of the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven.

JESUS CHRIST—is He the product of evolution?

And if the theory collapses here, presumably it has broken down in other places. It is by no means denied that the world was being gradually prepared for the advent of the Christ; but the preparation was negative, not positive; and a negative morality could never produce a positive Saviour. Contemplate the character of the Lord Jesus. How was it produced? Did the rottenness of society in His day grow His holiness? Did the bigotry and narrowness of His nation produce His large-heartedness and magnanimity? Did the hypocrisy and intense selfishness of His contemporaries engender His infinite holiness and unparalleled self-sacrifice, which stained the Cross of Calvary with His heart's blood? Development! What was there in sinful humanity that could develop into a sinless Saviour? Say what you will, before Bethlehem's Manger and Calvary's Cross the doctrine of evolution collapses like a pricked balloon.

How then to account for Jesus Christ among men? On the same principle as Adam is accounted for among animals—by the miraculous intervention of God. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Might of the Highest will overshadow thee, and the Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). The Lord Jesus is the unrivalled product of the direct creative power of the Almighty. The Birth of Bethlehem is a supernatural fact—no evolution of man, but the incarnation of God. God supernaturally interfered in the creation of matter, the origination of life, the production of mind, and the generation of Jesus

Christ. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Nature cannot, evolution cannot. But "what the law"—natural and moral—"could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh."

These events, not clustered together so as to disturb our equanimity respecting the stability of natural laws, but scattered over untold ages, commencing in the far-off æon at the beginning of time, and culminating in Bethlehem in the fulness of time, are the four great miracles of history. "The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit" (1 Cor. xv. 45). Adam in Eden was only the recipient of spiritual life; but Jesus Christ is a fountain of life, a quickening spirit, and therefore can impart life to others. Hence He is the Head of a new creation, and thereby is able to retrieve the disasters of the Fall. In one sense the Incarnation completes the original creation; in another it repairs the ruin and havoc wrought by the introduction of sin.

Appropriately, therefore, the volume of Revelation ends with a new earth and a new heaven, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The end returns upon the beginning, but octaves higher. In Genesis is beheld an earthly Paradise; in Revelation a Paradise which is heavenly. In Genesis a Tree of Life is seen growing in the midst of the Garden; in Revelation the same tree grows in the midst of the Celestial City and on either side of the river. In Genesis a river went out of Eden, whence it parted into four branches; in the Apocalypse is shown us a "pure

river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding" no longer out of the mountains of Armenia, "but out of the Throne of God and the Lamb," nevermore to be divided. To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be the glory, world without end!

CHAPTER V

THE CREATION OF MAN

THE second section of the Mosaic narrative begins at Gen. ii. 4: "These are the generations [*toledoth*] of the heavens and the earth." Ten times this formula is repeated in the Book of Genesis, each time on the introduction of a new subject. It is almost a pity that these internal demarcations are not more formally indicated in our Authorised Version. As Moses did not invent these "generations" or family registers, it is evident that they were transmitted from ancient times, and sacredly preserved in the archives of the children of Israel, and utilised by him for the purpose of a religious history of the world.

That he used ancient documents in the composition of Genesis seems to be a matter of common sense. Where then does his inspiration come in? In the balance of judgment displayed, in the infallible power to sift the spurious from the genuine, in the spiritual insight enabling him to lop off all excrescences, and to present to his readers only the true, the beautiful, and the good. Superior intellect is evidenced more by ability to separate truth from error than by power to assail or defend,

with ingenious plausibility and a vast exhibition of learning, certain specific theses. The mind which, by the power of insight, without the aid of the canons of criticism, is able at a glance to separate truth from the intermingling error, men usually honour with the name of genius. Having then in his possession documents giving the past history of mankind, Moses used them, not probably in their entirety, piecing them together mechanically, but with judgment and discrimination, such as any author, sensible of his responsibility, would naturally exercise.

Passing from the first to the second section, our attention is at once arrested by a significant change in the Divine Name. In the first, the Creator is without exception denominated God (Elohim); in the second, Lord God (Jehovah Elohim). In the conversation, however, between the tempter and Eve, the less sacred but more general term God is employed—a minute variation bearing on its face the unintentional mark of verisimilitude. Hence the apparently sound critical conclusion of the existence of an Elohist and a Jehovistic writer. Professor Driver describes the style of the Elohist as “unornate, measured, precise”; the Jehovist as “freer and more varied,” “picturesque and flowing.” Accordingly, wherever in the Pentateuch he comes across a verse or passage “picturesque and flowing,” he puts it down to the Jehovist; but where he meets with a matter-of-fact style, he credits it to the Elohist. In an analysis of words and phrases Dr. Driver is doubtless an expert; but others probably have cultivated a sense of style not inferior to his. Is it too

bold to say that the first chapter is as fully charged with poetry as the second, indeed, more so, inasmuch as the sublime ranks higher than the descriptive?

Postponing for the present the discussion relative to the respective meanings of Elohim, Jehovah, and Jehovah Elohim, let us proceed to examine the documents themselves. Writers of rationalistic proclivities revel in the occupation of enumerating the many disagreements between the two Creation narratives—the Elohistic and Jehovistic—in order to discredit their historical trustworthiness. The suggestion is,—Seeing the two accounts conflict, neither is correct. Here again Dr. Dods throws his great weight on the side of the destructive criticism. “The two accounts,” he says, “which no ingenuity can reconcile.” This asseveration is, in his estimation, so indisputable that it requires no corroboration or proof. More consonant would it be, it strikes me, with the sensitiveness of Christian feeling, if the eminent Scottish divine were less dogmatic in his pronouncements on the alleged “discrepancies.” Personally I profit more by the authors who elicit the musical harmonies of the rich organ than by those who always thump their fingers on every cracked string. Dr. Dods brings out with his well-known ability the underlying lessons; but our confidence in the inner teaching is shaken, when we are unceremoniously told that the story is self-contradictory, and therefore erroneous. Men of common sense ask, and with propriety, Why is truth arrayed in the garment of error? Is it truth? Seldom is the kernel sound and palatable, if encased in a cracked shell.

¹ *Genesis*, p. 2.

Putting aside the inspiration of the author of Genesis, and viewing him simply as an able, learned, honest man, is it conceivable that he would clumsily join together two narratives, which on the face of them contradict each other, which any schoolboy could detect, but which he could not see? The supposition is preposterous. Whatever the author of Genesis was, he was neither a fool nor a knave. Moses put the documents into his history because he perceived that they were essentially harmonious, and constituting a fit beginning to his religious history of the race.

The contradiction is superficial, the harmony deep, real. The order of the creative work in the first chapter is—(1) vegetation, (2) animals, (3) man. In the second the order runs—(1) man, (2) vegetation, (3) animals, (4) woman. The last in the first chapter is first in the second. Is not the conclusion truer and more reverent that the writer beheld the differences as well as we do, and that therefore the two accounts refer, not to the same work of creation, but that the first relates the creation of the earth in its totality, and the second the special preparation of that portion of the earth where human history was to find its starting-point? And when the two accounts are minutely examined, it is found that in the first chapter the word employed is *ha-arets*, signifying the earth as a whole, and in the second *adamah*, denoting that "region," "land," or "field" where mankind, represented by their first parents, began their chequered career. Other reconciliations have been suggested; and, where two or three are possible, no writer has the right, in an offhand manner, to

pronounce an adverse judgment. Be the author of Genesis who he may, he is not such a simpleton as to place palpable contradictions in the forefront of his history. Difficulties there are; but difficulties are not discrepancies.

In the first chapter Moses gives an account of the creation of man—the genus, the race—without descending to details: “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.” In the second he enters into particulars, tells us how God made the first human individual—not the race, but the progenitor of the race: “And the Jehovah God formed man, dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives; and man became a living soul.” With greater perspicuity than before, man’s double relation, to God on the one hand and to the earth on the other, is set forth.

I. The material side of his nature is explained: “And the Lord God formed—kneaded—man, dust of the ground.” The figure is borrowed from an artist kneading clay, and modelling it into the human form Divine. But to take this metaphor as covering the whole ground would lead us astray. God should not be viewed as simply an artisan, from an extraneous standpoint impressing His idea or form upon plastic matter. Other Scriptures correct this teaching by representing Him as an immanent principle of life, moulding the material figure from within, so that the corporeity is not the investiture, but the growth, of the idea.

What materials had God to knead? The formation of the human body was not a creation *ex nihilo*,

but the reconstruction of matter already existent. In ver. 19 we read that "the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air out of the ground." But of man it is recorded that the Lord God formed him, not out of the ground, but out of the dust of the ground—a subtle distinction which carries in it a world of meaning. Consciously or unconsciously, the intimation is conveyed that, in the human body, earthly matter has reached the highest refinement, gross elements being sublimated to a point unknown in the animal world. He was made, not out of a clod, but of the finest dust; in his fabric there is observable an extreme delicacy of texture. This comports well with the opinion that the Scriptural terms employed to denote the material wherewith our bodily frame was built designate, not matter in a coarse, undigested state, but in a condition of high refinement. Matter is carried as near the spiritual as practicable. "Thou shalt return unto the ground, for dust [*aphar*] thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." "I also am formed out of the clay [*chomer*]"—not the brickmaker's clay, rough and gritty, but the potter's, from which are manufactured vessels of honour for the king's use.

But be that as it may, due prominence is here given to the material part of our nature. The same physical elements, which constitute the earth-soil, go to the making of the human body. Physiology gives the following list: "carbon, chloride, phosphorus, fluorine, nitrogen, magnesium, silicum, aluminium, potassium, sodium, calcium, iron, manganese, titanium, oxygen, hydrogen." Science can reduce the body into all that; but she cannot make

all that into a body again! Therefore the Mosaic writer brings in the supernatural interposition of God.

But how? Two methods, at least, are conceivable. According to the first, God fashioned a model of clay, with all the external and internal organs complete, the muscles and nerves arranged in due order, all the joints closely compacted together, and then breathed into the inanimate statue, till the clay was converted into bone and flesh and ligaments, and the skin glowed with the pulsations of life. That is anthropomorphism, I confess; but, being men, we cannot well escape from it, and, did we succeed, we would perhaps be farther removed from the truth than we are now. Man being made in the image of God, anthropomorphism is often theomorphism. This is also the method in which the artistic mind of Greece conceived that Prometheus formed the first man. Into this form God is pourtrayed as breathing the spirit of life, till man became a living soul. As Elisha lay on the lifeless body of the child, and breathed into it till it revived, so God is pictured as waking man into self-consciousness with a kiss! A fitting beginning to the subsequent revelation of His love!

The other alternative is the method known as evolution. But two kinds of evolution are conceivable—naturalistic and supranaturalistic. The theory of evolution connected with the name of Darwin is the naturalistic, and teaches the procession of all that is from some original germ or cell, wholly in virtue of innate forces, called into activity by environments. It admits of no supernatural

interference or Divine influence *ab extra*. To it whether God exists or not is a problem; and if He does exist, it means nothing—He is of no good, does nothing. Eternal matter had enveloped in it the potency of all that is. Man proceeded from the animal, the animal from the fish, the fish from the tadpole, the tadpole from the eternal mud. To this theory of evolution the Bible from beginning to end, Moses no less than Paul, offers consistent, uniform resistance. To say nothing now of reason with its mathematical truths, and conscience with its inflexible moral principles, science miserably fails in the adduction of proofs. The most illustrious scientists are the most forward to proclaim this.

Professor Boyd-Dawkins points out that in the palæolithic age “man was present in Europe as man, and not as an intermediate form, connecting the human race with the lower animals.”

Professor Virchow of Berlin writes: “You are aware that I am now specially engaged in the study of anthropology; but I am bound to declare that every positive advance which we have made in the province of prehistoric anthropology has actually removed us farther from the proof of such a connection [of man with the ape]. . . . When we study the fossil man of the quaternary period, who must, of course, have stood comparatively near to our primitive ancestors in the order of descent, or rather of ascent, we find always a *man*, just such men as are now. . . . The old troglodytes, pile-villagers, and bog-people prove to be quite a respectable society. They have heads so large that many a living person would be only too happy to possess

such. . . . Nay, if we gather together the whole sum of the fossil men hitherto known, and put them parallel with those of the present time, we can decidedly pronounce that there are among living men a much larger number of individuals who show a relatively inferior type than there are among the fossils known up to this time. . . . Not a single fossil skull of an ape or an 'ape-man' has yet been found that could really have belonged to a human being. Every addition to the amount of objects, which we have attained as materials for discussion, has removed us farther from the hypothesis propounded." In the preface he says: "With a few individual exceptions, this protest has met with a cordial assent from German naturalists." His conclusion is: "*We cannot teach, we cannot pronounce it to be a conquest of science, that man descends from the ape or any other animal.*"¹

Mr. Wallace, who shares with Darwin the glory of the discovery attached to the latter's name, but who rejects the Darwinian conclusion in respect of man, says: "The few remains yet known of prehistoric man do not indicate any material diminution in the size of the brain-case. A Swiss skull of the stone age, found in the lake-dwelling of Meilen, corresponded exactly to that of a Swiss youth of the present day. The celebrated Neanderthal skull had a larger circumference than the average; and its capacity indicating actual mass of brain is estimated to have been not less than 75 cubic inches, or nearly the average of existing Australian crania. The Engis skull, perhaps the

¹ *The Freedom of Science*, pp. vi, 60, 62, 63.

oldest known, and which, according to Sir John Lubbock, 'there seems no doubt was really contemporary with the mammoth and the cave bear,' is yet, according to Professor Huxley, 'a fair average skull, which might have belonged to a philosopher or might have contained the thoughtless brains of a savage.' Of the cave men of Les Eyzies, who were undoubtedly contemporary with the reindeer in the south of France, Professor Paul Broca says: 'The great capacity of the brain, the development of the frontal region, the fine elliptical form of the profile of the skull, are incontestable characteristics of superiority, such as we are accustomed to meet with in civilised races.'"¹

When men such as these, acknowledged princes in the realm of science, thus speak, why the eagerness on the part of Christian divines to at once modify the Christian faith to accommodate the new theory? Of late years many theologians of repute, have written that between Christianity and evolution there is, and there need be, no incompatibility; that, if from a lower animal a higher animal is developed by natural forces, the argument from design is strengthened—contrary, however, to the protests of many of the leading upholders of evolution, who maintain that teleology is demolished—just as a silver watch, which could itself manufacture a gold one, would reflect all the more credit on the original watchmaker. But, admitting that evolution invigorates Theism, does it help to a true anthropology? If it leaves God intact, does it leave man intact? So far, I have

¹ *Theory of Natural Selection*, p. 336.

refused allegiance to the Darwinian evolution, partly in default of proofs, and partly, not in the interest of God, but in the interest of man. If man be a product of the evolution of nature, he cannot be more than the sum-total of all that preceded. Nothing can be *e*-volved which was not first *in*-volved; nothing can come out this end of the evolution-machine which did not go in at the other end. This is one valuable service Joseph Cook rendered by his lectures—driving home the truth that between involution and evolution there must be an algebraic equation. If mind has come out this end in man, it must have gone in at the other end in matter; or, if only matter went in the other end, only matter could come out this end—mind is only a function of matter.

A modified form, however, of the doctrine of evolution is possible—that which I have named the supranaturalistic. This admits of immediate Divine intervention at certain critical moments in the creation and development of life, by which God introduces new staple into the loom, new material into the machine. But these interventions should not be viewed as so numerous as to crowd the universe with miracles. The laws of nature are allowed to work out their own results for millions of years—results seen in innumerable varieties and improvements of species; but where these laws have developed themselves to their utmost capacity, and can do no more and reach no higher, Biblical theology introduces the direct aid of the Maker of the machine. Professor Du Boys-Reymond, himself a materialist, enumerates seven enigmas which

naturalistic evolution cannot solve: (1) the existence of matter and form; (2) the origin of motion; (3) the origin of life; (4) the appearance of design in nature; (5) the existence of consciousness; (6) intelligent thought and the origin of speech; (7) the question of Free Will. As bearing more especially on the subject of our present discussion listen to this eloquent man: "At some special point in the development of life on the earth, which we do not know, there appeared something new, hitherto unprecedented, a thing incomprehensible, like the essence of matter and force, and like the first beginning of motion. The thread of intelligence reaching away back into the endless past is snapped, and our knowledge of nature reaches a chasm, across which no bridge, no pinion can carry us. This new and incomprehensible thing is CONSCIOUSNESS. I am about to demonstrate, I believe, in a very conclusive way, that consciousness is inexplicable by material conditions, not only in the present state of our knowledge, which indeed every one admits, but that it will always remain inexplicable by such conditions." But, in the above places, where naturalistic evolution breaks down, the Biblical or supranaturalistic theory places God—the miraculous exertion of the Divine Power and Wisdom.

The second alternative therefore is, that the human body was evolved from a prior animal organism, the fittest for the purpose, not by the unassisted operation of natural laws and forces in the keen struggle for existence, but by the supernatural aid of God Almighty. On either hypothesis the Mosaic allegation stands good that the human

body was formed—dust of the ground. The view that God fashioned man straightway out of clay would dovetail with the Mosaic teaching, but leave the traces of prior existences, the “scaffolding,” in the body unexplained. The second view agrees quite as well with Genesis, whilst at the same time it accounts for the vestiges of reptile, fish, and animal observable in the evolution of the pre-natal human embryo.

This view, formed on independent grounds, is, I find, favoured by that profound thinker and accomplished scholar, Professor Tayler Lewis. After averring that the formation of man is “an entirely new creative act, and indeed the very highest,” he adds: “But this does not exclude the idea that the human physical was connected with the previous nature, or natures, and was brought out of them. That is, it was made from the earth in the widest signification of the term. That it was not a mere plastic shaping, or outward mechanical structure, is implied . . . in the non-passivity of the earth. There are immense difficulties connected with the idea of an outward Promethean image, a dead organisation which, although having the appearance, is really no organisation at all in the strict sense of the word, any more than the marble statue or the waxen image. No one supposes that the making of the human body was an immediate making *ex nihilo*. It was made from the earth, and this earth had already had its nature, according to its varieties of carbon, nitrogen, etc.; and these, as natures, connected with other natures, entered into the human body. If it is not a creation *ex nihilo*, which is

expressly contrary to the language of the account, we must suppose a connection with nature to a certain extent. What difficulty or danger, then, in giving to the phrase 'from the earth' the widest sense consistent with the idea of man's having an earthly as well as a heavenly origin? It is this latter idea, and the higher psychology connected with it, that furnishes to faith its shield against all mere theories of development that may proceed, with weaker or stronger evidence, from a naturalising science." ¹

"All that we have is the fact that by some process the human body was brought from the earth, or that thus the human physical, coming from the lower physical, and through the connecting links, types, or moulds, as carried upwards by the Divine formations, was at last brought into the state, in which it was prepared to receive that Divine inspiration, which alone constitutes the species and makes it man. The *primus homo* was the first man thus inspired, and who became the progenitor of the species. The first Adam was made by the Divine Life raising the physical or animal into the rational. The Second Adam represents a higher inspiration, elevating the rational human to a close union with the Divine. Such is the analogy of the Apostle. Christ elevates the human, even as the first human, 'by the inspiration of the Almighty,' is the uplifting of the mere animal or physical that lay below. The second mystery is the greater, and our belief in it should take away any wonder or difficulty that may attend the first." ²

¹ Lange's *Com.*, p. 211.

² *Ibid.*, p. 156.

II. We are now in a position to examine the second Mosaic statement that "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives, and man became a living soul."

Plurality of lives is here ascribed to man. The first is a life akin to that of the plant, a life which proceeds without pause in the organism. Whether we be asleep or awake, working or resting, the internal organs discharge their functions, without asking our consent or reporting to consciousness their doings. This vegetal life, having its centre in the heart, is involuntary. The food is swallowed; and this life instantly appropriates it, analyses it, directs each element to its proper channel, thus incorporating in the organism the aliment therein contained. What is this mysterious principle of life, which enables the internal organs, devoid of intelligence, to absorb what is conducive to health and vigour, and to expel all that is injurious and unwholesome? All men truly vegetate, and this vegetal or plant life is the substratum on which all nobler life is built.

The second is animal life, having its centre in the brain. As the vegetal life is the source of nutrition, so the animal life is the fount of sensation and locomotion. The more convoluted brain does not necessarily indicate greater intelligence, for it is the source of motor more than of thought power. "Advance in intelligence," says Professor Calderwood, "and advance in complexity of brain structure do not keep pace with each other, they are not correlated so as to harmonise."¹

¹ *Relation of Mind and Brain*, p. 148.

But over and above all is intellectual or spiritual life: "God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath [*ruach*] of lives, and man became a living soul [*nephesh*]." This word *nephesh*—soul—has reference to the two preceding sentences, and includes on the one hand the body, and on the other the spirit. In modern phraseology the soul is used in contradistinction from the body, but in the Old Testament as inclusive of both body and spirit. For the understanding, therefore, of Biblical psychology it is expedient that the mind grasps the comprehensiveness of meaning in the term "soul," that it is co-extensive with human nature on both sides, the physical and spiritual, gravitating in Biblical usage sometimes more to the corporeal and sometimes more to the spiritual signification. In Gen. i. 30 it is employed of irrational animals: "To every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is *life*, I have given every green herb for meat." The word for life here is the same word *nephesh*, and is rightly translated in the margin "a living soul." Everything which liveth, therefore, according to Scriptural nomenclature, has a *nephesh*, a living soul.

Take again the concomitant word *ruach*, spirit. On comparison of the passages where it occurs, we discover that it signifies the principle of life, and is therefore properly applicable to all living creatures. Thus we read in Gen. vii. 15: "And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath [*ruach*, spirit] of life." If both

words then are equally applicable to every living creature, wherein consists their difference? In this: *nephesh* designates the life, *ruach* the principle of life; the first denotes the effect, the second the cause—that invisible principle or force which issues in sensation and locomotion.

Nephesh then is life, *ruach* the principle of life: on this ground man and the animal creation are on the same level. The superiority of man over his humbler *confrères* lies in the possession, not of the principle, but of the *immortal* principle of life, symbolised by Moses as the inbreathing of God into the nostrils of man. This act differentiates man from all terrestrial beings. There are then body, soul, and spirit, the soul being the middle term in which body and spirit meet in the unity of personality.

Are we then to understand that Moses teaches the tripartition of human nature? Many of the ablest expositors answer in the affirmative, among them the learned Delitzsch. However, after a sympathetic examination of the theory, I perceive no sufficient reason to discard the old view that man is composed of two parts, one material, the other spiritual—spirit and soul being only two names to designate the double side of the one immaterial substance. On the world-side it is soul; on the God-side it is spirit. Consequently, when the connection between this immaterial substance and the material body is snapped in death, the former is no longer soul, but spirit. It is not the soul, but the spirit, which “returns to God which gave it.” It is not the souls, but the “spirits of just men,”

that dwell on Mount Zion. The spirit embodied is soul; the soul disembodied is spirit. This distinction may not be universally applicable, no such distinction being perhaps possible; but it is workable, and solves to a large extent the difficulties of phraseology frequently occurring in the Old and the New Testament.

This Divine inbreathing, what is its theological import? In the production of life, short of self-consciousness, God simply utters the creative fiat, merely exerts His bare omnipotence, and the desired result is achieved. But in the creation of man God more than speaks—He breathes into him the spirit of lives. The Divine inspiration, not the Divine command, it is which makes him a man. Does not this intimate that in the creation of man there was included an element of Divine generation? Moses is not afraid to use this word once and again. The heathen doctrine of emanation, as the necessary outflow of the Divine nature, must of course be repudiated; but that it contained a substratum of truth cannot be denied; how otherwise could it have met with such universal acceptance? That we are here touching on a great mystery we admit; therefore our words should be reverent and circumspect. Still, even in the darkness it is not politic to shut our eyes. This Divine inspiration of man seems to be something between the necessary generation of the Son and the statutory production of the animal—a voluntary, as distinguished from a necessary, emanation; partaking on the one hand of the character of generation, sharing on the other the character of pure creation.

It follows, according to the Mosaic teaching, that in man there resides something uncreated, truly Divine, more than finite. This truth made itself felt in the ethnic consciousness, and found utterance in the Greek poet—"We are God's offspring." Not only we are fashioned by, but begotten of, God. Deep down in our spirits, when we seriously reflect upon it in the stillness of the night, we feel that we transcend the creation, that we are greater than the mere finite—if not in our powers, then in our wants. We are the progeny of God, veritable members of the Divine household. Though this conviction found expression in Greek poetry, it did not find its explanation in Greek philosophy. The true solution is only to be found in the Mosaic doctrine of creation. The Genesis narrative satisfactorily accounts for the tragic poetry of Greece, whereas on the materialistic hypothesis of evolution the highest poetry of the world remains for ever inexplicable.

The Greek sentiment of constitutional affinity between God and man finds not only its elucidation, but its clearer articulation and larger expansion, in the Hebrew theology. From the Mosaic doctrine of the Divine inspiration of man, through deep pious meditation thereon, the prophets had awakened within them the consciousness which enabled them to have a glimpse of the natural fatherhood of God and the corresponding natural sonship of man. "Art Thou not our Father?" "The Father of spirits." This vague, indefinite sentiment was at length precipitated, reduced into a matter of fact, and introduced as the first link in the chain of genealogies

in the families of Israel : " The son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God " (Luke iii. 38). This last link St. Luke would not have introduced as an imaginary embellishment ; for, if he took the liberty of adding a new link at the commencement, at the bidding of fancy, what guarantee should his readers have that he was not indulging in imaginary inventions all through his history? Hebrew theology had, in the roll of the centuries, consolidated itself into the hard fact here posited. Moses, at the commencement of the Old Testament, says : " God breathed into the first man's nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul." Luke's comment, at the beginning of the New Testament, is : " Adam, son of God." The inspiration of man in Genesis has, in the Israelite consciousness, developed, till in the fulness of time it blossomed into the filiation of man. Marvellous the analogies between the beginning and the end of the Bible! How to account for them? So far as I can see, there is but one explanation—a superhuman mind guided the entire process.

In these chapters Moses lays down the primal basis of the subsequent doctrine of the natural Fatherhood of God and of the correlated doctrine of the natural Sonship of man. God is the Maker of the stars, but He is the Father of men. He is the Creator of the brutes, but He is the Begetter of spirits. In His first origination man derived from God some quality or principle—call it what you will—something truly, genuinely Divine, constituting him the son of God. Hence his ceaseless roamings beyond the boundaries of the finite and

limited into the boundless and the vast. Evidence of the Divine element in him is that he always seeks the Beyond, hankers after the Unknown. He is always attempting to escape from his limitations, battering at the partition walls of the finite; and, when he cannot demolish the walls, he takes to his wings and flies away. He soars beyond the limits of time and space. He has an idea of the infinite, eternal, incomprehensible. Just think what that means! It straightway marks him out as a comrade of the gods. Plato seeks to explain these longings, these endless flutterings of the spirit, on the hypothesis that they are dim reminiscences of our pre-existence in a higher state of being. Wordsworth interprets at the same time the Platonic philosophy and the Mosaic theology in the well-known lines:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy.¹

How to account for the popularity of these words, the echoes of which never die within us? Only on the supposition that they present a true explanation of our spiritual instincts, that the poet in language felicitous and musical gives

¹ Ode, *Intimations of Immortality*.

eloquent tongue to the pent-up consciousness of the race.

The ancients had a fable of the lost bells, sunk in the bottom of the sea; but which, when the waves lay still, and the winds hushed, gently tolled, as if calling men to worship, their soft, pure notes being heard by the mariners on clear, starry nights. Have you never heard the tolling of the lost bells? In the cool of the evening, or under the light of the stars, when the turmoil of business had subsided, and the passions slept, did you not hear the bells calling you to church? Did you not catch the soft, dying notes of heavenly music, gently welling up from the depth of your nature, a still, small voice as from eternity, soft and loving like the warbling of a blackbird at the burial of its mate, till you longed for home, for heaven, for God? I need no German commentators to explain to me the Divine Inbreathing—I know the dream and the interpretation thereof. I have, time and again, listened to those bells gently summoning me to worship; I have bowed my knees in the mystic twilight in the dales and on the hills; I have sobbed out in broken accents the words, Abba, Father; and I have felt the Divine Breathing fresh in my face as in Eden, warm, sympathetic, enlivening, like the south wind over a garden of roses; and from the midst of bodily infirmity, intellectual torpor, and spiritual lethargy, I have risen a living soul, claiming my sovereignty over the creatures, and my fellowship in God's family, and all this by Right Divine!

III. The two constituent parts of human nature,

the material and spiritual, are joined in the Unity of Personality.

Modern thought has been in the habit of laying stress on the contrariety of body and mind. It has viewed the body as the prison, not the palace, of the soul; a shackle, impeding the free movements of the spirit, instead of an organ or instrument facilitating its acts of thought. But Hebrew theology took a diametrically opposite view. In man, as God made him, body and soul form a harmonious human personality. So far from being a hindrance or clog, the physical nature is a help, and essential to the ideal humanity. A pure spirit may in the nakedness of its essence carry on mental operations; I am speaking of the human spirit. Mind without body, spirit without corporeity, is not man, but man mutilated, divided, broken. Consciousness of this truth made the ancients look upon death as the King of Terrors. To them the dissolution of the body meant the disintegration of the man. And they were right. To their thinking the other world was Sheol, the Land of Shades; life was not extinct, but it only dimly smouldered; consciousness was not eliminated, but it had lost all vividness. The colours were all washed out of the life. Therefore life in union with the body, however impoverished, was deemed incomparably preferable to life without the body. The immortality of the soul was, of course, from the outset an article of their creed, or, rather, not an article, but the substratum of all their belief. To them, however, sheer annihilation was almost preferable to the mere immortality of the naked soul. They shuddered at the thought of

Sheol, where the spirit survived, a pale, thin, attenuated skeleton of its former self. The poet embodies the Hebrew thought on the matter :

I go whence I shall not return,
Even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death ;
A land of thick darkness, as darkness itself ;
A land of the shadow of death, without any order,
And where light is as darkness.¹

In death there is no remembrance of Thee,
In Sheol who shall give Thee thanks ?²

This feeling of indescribable depression in the grim presence of death, so observable in the Hebrews, possessed the Greek mind even more fully. Homer makes one of his departed heroes say that he would prefer leading the life of a swineherd on the earth to dwelling in the land of the shadow of death. The Greeks, like the Hebrews, believed in the immortality of the soul ; but viewing matter as essentially evil, to them the body was the prison of the soul ; consequently the doctrine of the resurrection of the body never glimmered through their darkness. The Hebrews, on the contrary, starting from the right premises as set forth by Moses in the Creation story—that matter is not in itself evil, and that consequently the body is not an unequal yoke-fellow to the spirit, that matter and mind are necessary to the realisation of the Divine ideal of humanity—gradually groped through the darkness of the grave into a dim apprehension of the doctrine of the Resurrection. By this it is not intended that they, by meditation alone, would have arrived at this doctrine ; but that the

¹ Job x. 21, 22.

² Ps. vi. 5.

Creation story afforded a ground in their religious consciousness for a belief in the doctrine, gradually revealed, that, as the union of body and soul forms an integral part of the Divine idea of man, these two constituent factors would not remain for ever separate, and that the body would yet be rescued from the power of the grave.

Greek philosophy fitfully taught the immortality of the soul ; to teach the immortality of the body would be in flat contradiction to one of its fundamental principles—to wit, the inherent evil of matter. But Hebrew theology, establishing itself on the Creation story, had ample room in it for the doctrine of the immortality of man in the totality of his dual nature—the survival of the soul through death and the resurrection of the body in the last day, the two thenceforth to be indissolubly and for ever united. The doctrine of the Resurrection rests foursquare on the Mosaic doctrine of Creation. It is not an extraneous speculation, thrown in as compensation for the trials, conflicts, and deprivations of our present pilgrimage, a guilt appendix to the volume of life, but a truth essential to salvation, laying hold of the core of humanity, and without which the Divine ideal of man would for ever remain fragmentary and incomplete.

In his creation man was a compound being, each constituent necessary to the realisation of the Divine order. Sin broke up the unity, and by death sundered what God had joined. The Salvation in Christ is a salvation of body and soul, not only that its virtues might be co-extensive with the ravages wrought by sin, but that man might be restored to

his pristine perfection. Thus the fully developed doctrine of the Resurrection in the New Testament is the complement, indeed the consequent, of the Genesis doctrine of Creation. Are not these correspondences wonderful? The teaching of Moses in Genesis concerning creation furnishes the foundation for the teaching of Paul in the New Testament concerning the resurrection of the dead. Is there not in Scripture a progressive evolution as amazing as anything Science has discovered in Nature? Assuredly the Maker of Nature is, in a profound sense, the Author of Scripture.

CHAPTER VI

MAN IN EDEN

IN the first two chapters Adam is a generic name, without a capital letter : " And God said, Let Us make man [adam] in Our image, after Our likeness." In the third chapter the generic is converted into a specific or proper name, denoting not the genus, but the individual Adam. On the precise meaning of the term scholars are, as usual, divided. The most accepted signification is that Adam means earth. An objection, however, has been raised against this derivation, because of the improbability that the Creator would give His noblest creature a cognomen applicable to his lower, not his higher, nature. Hence attempts have been made to trace it to *damah*—to be *like*, to *resemble* : " Let Us make man, Our likeness." Determined never to be left behind, a few rationalists, demurring to the above explanations, trace it to the Ethiopic *amuthig*—pleasant, agreeable, handsome. Doubtless the reply is pertinent : " Certainly not, if man's primitive condition were that which the Higher Criticism, in spite of history as well as revelation, is determined it shall be. The squalid dweller in the cave, surrounded by wolves, and bones, and stone axes, and

hardly distinguishable from his beastly companions, would be the last to be called, or who would think of calling himself, the *agreeable* one."

I. After his creation, Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden. Modern science lays much stress on environments, attributing to them, as much, if not more influence than to organism itself, in the formation of character. Environments doubtless exert powerful influence also on human career and destiny. And, before detailing to us the life of the first man, Moses very properly first describes his surroundings. He presents us with three circles. First, the earth in its entirety, in its virgin, uncultivated condition, waiting to be won over to, and subdued by, the intelligence of man. Second, a region of country which he calls Eden, a land of delight, variegated doubtless with hills and dales, pastures and forests. Within this region man was created. The third, an inner circle yet, an enclosed park, called a Garden, into which man was transported after his creation.

In the first paragraph, describing man's formation, the writer employs the past tense. In the second he uses the present, which seems to hint that, in the writer's time, the geography of Eden was still ascertainable. Into the probable vicinity of Eden the researches of archæologists and scholars have been multitudinous and protracted. Seven localities, at least, from North India to North Europe, have been ingeniously advocated. But the two lands which have found most favour are Babylonia and Armenia, and of these the balance of probability favours the latter. Further on, the Cainites are said to have

removed away from Eden eastward to Nod, justifying the inference that the descendants of Seth, notwithstanding the expulsion of the race from the Garden, continued to live in the ancestral land, of Eden. Therefore, when the deluge overtook the world of ungodly men, Noah's ark rested on the Ararat range of mountains, the main watershed of Armenia.

The point, however, on which stress should be laid is, that, according to Moses, man's original environments were all perfect, his outward surroundings offering him no temptation to fall away from his integrity. Eden, meaning pleasantness, the Septuagint rightly renders Paradise, signifying the beautifully wooded park, in front of a secluded Oriental mansion, where grow all manner of trees and evergreens, and where gambol all kinds of animals, and where carol all sorts of birds—all for the delight of man. "And the Jehovah God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed." That this Garden was abundantly irrigated, and grew all kinds of trees, the history testifies. An ideal home for an innocent being! Whenever subsequent writers wish to set forth scenery of extreme beauty, and fertility of excessive abundance, they always compare it to this Garden of the Lord's planting: "He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God." "This land, which was desolate, is become like the garden of Eden." Like aroma clinging to the garment or sweet scent to the tresses of the hair, the memory of that happy state continues to haunt

humanity in all its remote wanderings. We have never been able to shake off the fragrance of Eden.

In the mythologies of the East and of the West frequent references are made to celebrated gardens—to the garden of Adonis by the Assyrians, and the garden of the Hesperides with its golden apples by the Greeks, the entrance to which was carefully guarded by mysterious dragons, an echo, it would seem, of the cherubim which guarded the gates of Eden. As among these nations these traditions are nothing more than myths, why, it is asked, should similar stories among the Hebrews be treated as sober, matter-of-fact history? The question is perfectly legitimate. But the subject may present itself in another aspect: are all the ancient myths mere subjective fancies, or are they embellished reminiscences of the race of primordial facts? That the drapery is woven out of the imagination of these nations is conceded; but does not the manufacture of the gorgeous raiment prove that there was an interior truth to wear and uphold the raiment? Men do not make garments to hang upon nothing. These mythologies point to a primeval truth; the gardens of Oriental mythologies and classic poetry to a real, veritable garden in the far-off past, near the fount of universal history. If truth is not found here, where is it to be found? Are men to be for ever victims of illusions, pursuing truth, but never able to overtake it? God is not an almighty Jester.

Compare the Mosaic delineation of the pristine condition of man with his degraded state as pictured

by evolutionary theorists. In Genesis man is created of full stature, the image of his Maker, a true *ἄνθρωπος*, with figure erect, and eyes turned skyward, under the fostering care of his Heavenly Parent. Instead of turning the newly formed and inexperienced human creature into the open highland, exposed to the attacks of wild beasts, to contend with inferior but fleetier animals for a morsel of food, He placed him in an enclosed garden, adorned with trees for ornament and use. How otherwise in the presence of ravenous brutes could the permanence of the human species be guaranteed?

The environments were ideally perfect. Poetry has not been able to pourtray a lovelier condition, and earth can furnish no apter simile than Paradise to set forth the beatitude of heaven itself. If man sin, the blame cannot be laid at the door of his Maker or to the charge of his circumstances. On the other hand, contemplate his primitive degradation as painted by the cunning hand of Professor Drummond. He sits at night perched like a monkey on the branches of the primeval forest, forbidding in countenance, covered with hair; in the daytime moving stealthily about, sometimes as biped, sometimes as quadruped, and by low-bred cunning over-reaching other animals in his search for food, voraciously devouring uncooked meat,—half-starved, savage, repulsive. How could the evolutionary man fall, when there were hardly lower abysses for him to fall into? Or, rather, how could he help sinning in this awful, cruel struggle for existence? The evolutionary theory gives the

lie direct to the universal recollection of the race of a golden age in the times of old. Moses, however, depicts this golden age, or rather this golden hour, in man's history ; and in the proper place pourtrays his degradation, a worse because a moral degradation ; but he gives a satisfactory exposition of it, and assigns to it an adequate moral cause. According to Moses, man became the lowest because he was the highest. Only the best is capable of the worst.

II. Moses next indicates the duties devolving upon Adam in his state of innocence : "The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them to Adam." Here then are the two great branches of all agriculture—the cultivation of plants and the domestication of animals.

The first part of Adam's duty consisted in the diligent "dressing" of the ground. God's primal command to man was, "Multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." The virgin state of the earth was not that of arable cultivation. After the millions of years, in which her laws operated unmodified by man, Nature was in a state of comparative wildness, though not of obdurate refractoriness, to which she was reduced after the introduction of sin. Man was introduced on the scene with a view to "subdue" it—*i.e.* to cultivate the soil, to check the rank growths, to promote the development of what was useful and beautiful. The work began in Paradise. God Himself planted a garden in Eden,

as a model to man of what he was to accomplish in regard to the whole earth.

Even had man never sinned, he was not destined to remain always in the first Garden, but to go out and make other gardens like it. Proper it was that he should commence in the Garden of Eden, in an enclosure not too large, in the then tractable state of nature, for his own labour to dress it, and extensive enough to supply all the physical wants of himself and family. But as population increased, mankind were to extend their cultivation beyond the Garden, to the district called Eden, making it also a garden, a well-cultivated tract. As the inhabitants still multiplied, they were to continue to extend the area of cultivation, to reclaim waste lands, till gradually the whole earth would be converted into a fertile garden, and the desert made to blossom as the rose. The task of "subduing" was to be continuous, stretching out in all directions, in proportion to the increase of population. The labour would neither be exhaustive nor go unrewarded. As long as man maintained his normal relation to his Creator, the soil would respond readily to his cultivation; but if man entered on a career of rebelliousness against God, Nature would divert to a course of disobedience to man, her subjugation becoming more strenuous and difficult.

To the planting of the Garden of Eden to be a fit abode for man, chap. ii., vers. 5 and 6 probably refer: "In the day the Lord God made every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the

Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." Bunsen, Baden-Powell, Driver, and others make these statements contradictory of the first chapter, where the prior creation of vegetable and plant life is described. The majority of commentators, however, limit their application to the district, the history of which is here specially narrated.

Take first the Authorised rendering as above. According to this the meaning is, that God made the universe, plant and herb, things great and small, by His word, in a supernatural way. The natural way is for plants and herbs to grow under the influence of sunshine and rain, and in response to the "tilling" of the earth by man. But the first plants and herbs were created, when there was no rain upon the earth, and no man to till the ground—an affirmation of the supernatural by the denial of the natural.

Dr. Jamieson adopts another rendering: "The truth is, there is no room for speculation upon the subject, as the meaning of the sacred historian, which is rather obscurely and confusedly given in the English Version, is, when rightly brought out from the original text, both clear and definite." After referring to a well-known rule of Hebrew grammar, that *every*, followed by a negative, produces the sense of *none*, he continues: "If, then, we regard the title or superscription prefixed to this section as ending at the word 'created,' conformable to the reading in the Septuagint Version, and the section as beginning with the words 'in the day,' the whole passage as

rendered by Rosenmüller, De Wette, Tuch, and others will stand thus: 'These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day when the Lord God made earth and heaven, then no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field yet grew; for the Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth and watered the ground.'"¹

The point of the narrative seems to be that, in that particular spot where Eden was situated, new species of plants and trees were produced nearly contemporaneous with the creation of man, for they were necessary for his sustenance, and he was necessary for their cultivation. To produce them without him would be to consign them to inanition; to create him without them would be to expose him to starvation. "God does everything beautiful in his season." Certain classes of plants, herbs, and trees thrive in a wild state; others only flourish under human oversight. If they be not sown anew every year, they will not run wild, but will actually die out. For their existence they are dependent upon Divine creation; for their continuance they are dependent upon human cultivation. To this class belong the cereals and the vegetables requisite for the comfort of man. It is a singular coincidence, indisputably attested by geologic science, that wheat, fruit trees, certain domestic animals, and man appeared contemporaneously on the face of the earth. What would be the good of producing breadcorn millions, or even

¹ *Com., in loco.*

hundreds, of years before man? To their continuous growth man was necessary; and doubtless to this species of plants and herbs the sacred historian refers. The words *plant*, *field*, and *grew* do not occur in the first chapter at all. Grasses and weeds, the food of animals, thrive without cultivation; but the higher flora demand constant care and supervision. They were not therefore produced till the two indispensable conditions of their cultivation were introduced—heavy dew to irrigate the soil and man to take the oversight of them. Singular also that, through the geological millenniums, no perfumes were wasted on the desert air. Aromatic herbs only appeared, so to speak, in the human period. Corn for food and scents for pleasure mark the advent of man, the coming of the king.

The second branch of agriculture is the domestication of animals. Which of the two branches is the more important it is difficult to tell. In Greek mythology a controversy is reported to have arisen between Athene (Minerva) and Poseidon (Neptune) concerning their right to give a name to a certain city. The senate of the gods resolved to settle the dispute by promising the preference to whichever of the two that would give the most valuable present to the inhabitants of the earth. Thereupon Poseidon struck the ground with his trident, and immediately there issued from the earth a horse. Athene, following his example, struck the earth with her spear, and up sprang an olive tree. But even then there was a difference of opinion which was the more valuable gift—the olive or the horse, the cultivation of plants or the domestication of animals. Without contradic-

tion, these two are the most useful gifts of Heaven to mankind. God committed to man the sovereignty of the animal creation, saying: "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." This sovereignty consists in two things. First, it confers on man the right to slay the creatures he requires for his sustenance. The inference sometimes drawn that permission was not given man to eat meat till after the Deluge is gratuitous. What we do not read in the Bible is clearly imprinted on our nature—man is constituted a flesh-eating creature. The charter granted to Noah was only a republication of the Creation charter, which men by sin had forfeited. Second, this original sovereignty further confers on man the right to subordinate the animals to his purposes and make them his auxiliaries in the work of cultivation. They were not "helps meet" for him, but they were intended to be helps all the same, and very valuable helps too. It was man's prerogative to tame, train, and accustom them to the yoke.

Accordingly the story tells us that God brought to Adam the beasts and the fowls "to see what he would call them." In the first chapter God bestows on man the abstract right of sovereignty; here He confers it *de facto*. The author takes for granted that he is writing for men of common sense—not for critics who exercise their ingenuity to extract from him every species of folly. Where the grammar and vocabulary will admit of more than one construction, it is our imperative duty to adopt the one most congruous with sound sense and the general drift of

the passage. The history evidently does not intend that the ravenous beasts of the forest, or the wild game of the mountains, were made to pass before Adam ; but only those animals and birds gathered within the Eden enclosure, and fitted by their gentle nature to become useful to him in his pursuit of agriculture. As God had stamped His image on man, so man was to impress his likeness on the world—to *humanise* nature, to spiritualise matter. The animals and birds were brought to him that he might enter on his sovereignty, that by naming them he might prove his superiority to them, and demonstrate his power to reduce them to subjection. To name implies, not the arbitrary affixing of a name to nominally distinguish one animal from another—an outward label, but to understand the nature, to discern the purpose, and to ascertain the use. The man who names is king ; the creature named is subject. That law is eternal and inviolable. So far as man can name is he king ; till he can name, his sovereignty is but nominal. Ever since, the creation, animate and inanimate, has been passing before man to be named—that is to say, to be understood ; and till you understand a thing you cannot truly name it—you cannot classify it and reduce it to service in our work-a-day world. What is science ? Only nature, living and non-living, passing before man, that man may study it and understand it, and give its various objects a name, and thereby exercise his lawful dominion over the realm of nature. Scientists have made merry over this Genesis story ; but viewed aright, it is only the Hebrew way of describing the first rudiments of natural history and natural science.

Adam was beginning to do in Eden what agriculturalists are advised to do in our own country—to farm scientifically; and this they cannot do without understanding the nature of the animals and the quality of the soil; and, in proportion as they understand, they will name.

III. Here, however, we are confronted with the questions: In what sense are we to understand that God planted a garden in Eden? Do the words signify more than general creation? In what sense are we to understand that God brought the animals to Adam to be named? In other words, had the first man the benefit of the direct tuition of God? Did the Divine Being become his friend and instructor? After some hesitation, I am constrained to return an affirmative answer. Popular theology is wont to speak of God visiting the Garden, and holding communication, face to face, with Adam, as He afterwards did with Moses; and popular theology, I believe, is right.

Pause to consider what this means. A Divine theophany must be assumed—that God, in the form, though not possibly in the reality, of man, appeared to Adam, and undertook Himself the task of giving him his first lesson in the art of living. The foundation of the Old Testament theophanies is laid in the creation of man in the image of God. Hard terms are often used of the anthropomorphism of the Bible, and occasionally theologians themselves indulge in epithets the reverse of complimentary. Moses, however, clearly teaches, and the Bible everywhere assumes, the theomorphism of man; and the theomorphism of man involves the anthropo-

morphism of God. The concave exhibits the form of the convex.

Holy Writ speaks of the Form of God, and that He took upon Him the Form of man; and the two Forms, says Moses, are originally congruous and correspondent. That being the case, the theophanies of God do not come upon the mind with a shock and a surprise. What nobler in the world than the human Form? Do you think it worthier of Deity to appear in a cloud of glory, or a sudden flash of light after the similitude of pantomime lightnings, than in the human form Divine? We must beware lest in our anxiety to eschew Anthropomorphism we fall into downright Materialism. The human body is the compendium of the excellences of all prior existences. Men of science should be the last to protest against the appearances of God in the form of man. According to their own creed, it is a form which has taken untold ages to build up; the utmost the earth, and perhaps the universe, after many millions of years of travail, has brought forth; the chief among ten thousand created forms, and most of them lovely; the elect of more creatures than the sand on the seashore, that have been destroyed, age after age, on purpose that it might become more perfect. In this human form God appeared unto Adam, and initiated him into the first principles of civilised life. "As Jehovah God (vers. 15, 16) is named as the establisher of the order of life, of natural science, or of the human knowledge of it; of marriage and of the law of the family (vers. 21-24); as the judge and founder of the religion of the promise, and of the

moral conflict on the earth, of the earthly state of sorrow and discipline (chap. iii. 1); and, finally, as the immediate director of human chastity and the author of human clothing (ver. 21),—so also here, in the beginning, He is represented as the first Planter, the Founder of human culture, which is as yet identical with human cultus or worship.”¹

It is asked, Is it not degrading the Eternal to picture Him thus planting a garden, and instructing man in the first elements of husbandry? I answer, Is it more humiliating than to create the chaotic mud? More lowering than to make the insect, the toad, the reptile, and the rodent? Our conceptions of what is honourable and becoming on the one hand, and of what is humiliating and dishonouring on the other, must be formed by other than the conventional standards set up by the European nobility. To God nothing is lowering or dishonouring, except the sinful, the immoral. The Divine condescension thus placed in the foreground of human history, at the commencement of the Old Testament, will prepare us for that infinitely greater condescension at the beginning of the New Testament, when God became man, not in similitude but in verity, and had to learn the first rudiments of human culture. In Genesis He is an instructor in husbandry; in the Gospels He is an apprentice to carpentry!

Granting that God was the teacher, what aptitude had man to learn? What were the intellectual endowments with which he began life? Genesis does not furnish us with a direct answer; yet data

¹ Lange, *Com.*, *in loco*.

enough are supplied here and elsewhere for us to draw an approximately correct conclusion.

Two extreme views have been advocated. Of course, materialistic evolutionists, so far from representing man as "made a little lower than the angels," declare him to be made but infinitesimally higher than the brutes. He was *homo alalus*—had no language, could not speak, had really nothing to express. Many theologians, on the contrary, have exhausted their rich store of elegant diction to pourtray the exalted condition, intellectual and moral, in which man was created. Dr. South, with his stately eloquence, declares that Adam was "the most splendid specimen of the race the world ever saw, fair as an angel, holy as a seraph," that "an Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise." And Aristotle himself teaches that man's reason, before the Fall, was, compared with ours, as the bird to the tortoise. They conceive him endowed with a native intuition, penetrating with a lightning glance into the hidden secret of natural objects and phenomena, enabling him to cleave every difficult problem right down to its very base.

The truth doubtless lies, as usual, in the golden mean. Obviously at his creation man's mind was empty of all positive knowledge. There was nothing in the mind except the mind itself, the innate truths, if the expression may be allowed, inwoven into his very texture ; and even these had not attained unto mental consciousness. Knowledge, in the shape of information, obviously he had not. The contents of the mind were nothing ; but what about the size and strength of the mind itself? Believing, as we

do, that he was the immediate creation of God, we cannot refuse to believe that he was enriched with mental powers of the first magnitude; and that, exempt from the obscuration of sin, he acquired knowledge with a rapidity and ease unknown to the most opulently gifted of his posterity. In capacity, I doubt not, he equalled, probably surpassed, the most brilliant of his descendants.

The same truth holds good on a smaller scale of the fossil men. Their craniums incontestably prove that, though in the amount of knowledge they, in the nature of things, were inferior to modern races, their brain-power was not an atom less. Judged by capacity, not by the amount of their information, they will bear favourable comparison with men who lead the vanguard of modern arts and sciences. And in mental capacity, our belief in Adam's supernatural formation compels us to place him in the foremost rank. Add to this his sinlessness; and his facility in the acquisition of knowledge and the inerrancy of his conclusions form an inevitable corollary. Given a teacher of such consummate mastery as God, and a pupil of such quick receptivity as Adam, and his strides in knowledge must have been beyond our ability, limited from within and without, to adequately realise.

Which language was the medium of communication between God and him, and between him and Nature, may not be determined in our present state of knowledge. But suppose it was Hebrew, which our fathers believed had strong claims to priority, and scholars can now hear the distinct

echo of that first man's words, and discern in them the working of his mind. How hard to invent language, to create a new word! And when a new word, like "agnosticism," is introduced into a language and finds a home there, it is but a new combination of old vocables. How difficult to create a new root! Adam's mind, however, threw out new words like sparks from the anvil; but we should not forget that the Almighty it was who was wielding the hammer. According to Moses, Adam was not a *homo alalus*, a non-speaking man, but was creatively gifted with the faculty of speech. This power God did not allow to lie dormant, but adopted measures to draw it out into healthful exercise. The immediate acquisition of knowledge is to us a mystery; yet the possibility of mastering a language, and of speaking it, without undergoing the painful drudgery of learning, is demonstrated to Christian believers by the miracle of the Pentecost, when twelve unlearned apostles were inspired to preach in new tongues, of the existence of which, much more of their grammar, they were previously in absolute ignorance.¹

Professor Drummond has devoted the fifth chapter of his well-known book to prove that man was at first speechless: "If evolution is the method of creation, the faculty of speech was no sudden gift. . . . Before *Homo sapiens* was evolved, he must necessarily have been preceded for a longer or shorter period by *Homo alalus*, the not-speaking man. . . . The alternative theory of the origin of language,

¹ May I refer the reader for a discussion of the miracle of the Gift of Tongues to my *Studies in the Acts*?

universally held until lately, and expressed in so many words, even by the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, that 'our first parents received it by immediate inspiration,' has the same relation to exact science as the view that the world was made in six days by direct creative fiat. . . . But to make Speech and fit it into a man, after all is said, is less miraculous than to fit a man to make Speech."

It will be observed that the Professor begins this interesting paragraph with an "if." All hinges on that "if." "If" Professor Drummond's theory of evolution be right, then the question of the origin of language is settled in the manner he describes; but "if" his theory be wrong, then his opinions on the origin of language are "airy nothings." It is simply a question whether Moses or Drummond is right. According to the latter's theory, Nature, having once been started, is self-contained, works out its results slowly, and brooks no interference from without. All its wonders are slow growths, and not "something quick." But our argument all along has been that Nature does receive assistance from without, and that, when that assistance is vouchsafed, Nature hastens her paces and performs "something quick." God created animal life—it was a supernatural act; not a gradual growth, but "something quick." In his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, Professor Drummond lays much stress on the scientific truth that out of the non-living the living cannot come; hence the necessity of Regeneration by the Spirit. But in his *Ascent of Man* this "natural law" is conveniently dropped. God

created mental life—it was a supernatural act ; not Nature evolving man by her own unaided resources, but, assisted by God and under the Divine impulse, she did “something quick,” something she could not do of herself throughout all the cycles of time.¹

According to Genesis, the man God produced was not a savage, dwelling in the terrible primeval forest, scrambling among brutes hardly lower than himself for a precarious living, but a civilised being, richly equipped with all mental endowments. “To make Speech and fit it into a man, after all is said, is less miraculous than to fit a man to make Speech.” Were that the only alternative—either speech for man or man for speech—Professor Drummond would be right. But the theological view includes both. The man of Mosaic theology was much fitter to make speech than the savage of evolution. According to Moses, God fitted man to make speech, and qualified him more abundantly than Drummond will admit. On the other hand, He fitted speech for man : instead of letting man grope in the dark to construct a vocabulary, He took him at once into fellowship with Himself—He spoke to man, and encouraged man to speak back, so that, from the outset, there was intelligent intercourse. Even on the score of breadth of view, the Bible far transcends the onesided theories of human science. God made Adam confront the animal creation on purpose to excite within him the power of thought—thought being the only lawful sceptre of man’s kingship—and thought always strives for utterance in articulate speech.

¹ See Dr. Watts’ *Ascent of Man Examined*.

God did not give Adam a language ready-made, as the Professor imagines we believe, with grammar and dictionary complete ; but He started him on the right track, and what was thus begun under Divine superintendence Adam evolved in accordance with the principles of mind. The supernatural here, as elsewhere, is only the beginning of the natural. It is supernatural only in respect of what precedes ; it is the true natural in respect of what follows. God started the machinery of speech by direct intercourse with man ; then man was left to develop language in strict accordance with psychological laws. But how could man thus "quickly" acquire mastery of speech ? Whether it was quickly or slowly I cannot tell. But we, who believe in the supernatural Gift of Tongues in the second chapter of the Acts, cannot on the score of incomprehensibility refuse credence to the supernatural Gift of Speech in the second chapter of Genesis. The supernatural always is incomprehensible. Beyond the circle of light there is always a larger circle of darkness.

CHAPTER VII

UNITY AND ANTIQUITY OF MAN

WHAT was the length of the interval between the creation of Adam and that of Eve? The story furnishes no answer. Those who adopt the literal interpretation of the six days are constrained to crowd all the events of the second chapter into a few hours in the evening of the sixth day. The creation of Adam, his translation into the Garden, the naming of the animals, the deep sleep which fell upon him, and the extraction of the woman from his wounded side, followed each other in rapid succession, the whole process extending over only a few hours. But those who understand the term "day" in the narrative as signifying an indefinite period are under no necessity to thus crowd events of the greatest import into a few fleeting hours. Divine procedure is never characterised by undue haste. Reason postulates a considerable period. Time was required for Adam to possess his soul in patience, to acquire self-control, and to have his consciousness awakened into healthful activity. The story shows God holding fellowship with him, instructing him in his duties, spiritual no doubt as well as earthly; and the improbability is great that God would throw the newly made creature into a state of unnecessary

agitation and excitement. Leisure was given the man to survey his inheritance, to study his surroundings, to ascertain his longitude and latitude on the ocean of being upon which he had been suddenly launched. Weeks may have transpired, probably did transpire, during which he was under the immediate tutorship of his Maker, being initiated into the truths and rites of religion, and learning the duties devolving upon him as the sovereign lord of the terrestrial creation, and gradually exercising his organs of speech, and acquiring mastery over the principles of language.

At the termination of this period of solitariness, except for the colloquies between him and his Maker, "the Lord God brought to him the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air"—his companions in the Garden, whose habits and characters had formed the objects of his close scrutiny—to test his knowledge, to bring his observations to a practical focus, and to excite in him a healthy desire for natural science, which then was synonymous with natural religion. That God demanded of His creature to invent appropriate names for the various animals, names which would not be arbitrary signs but accurate indices to their inner natures, at the spur of the moment, without opportunity for observation and reflection, runs counter to all the principles of sound sense. The invention of an appropriate nomenclature, applicable to the animal world, was doubtless the culminating point of a previous course of instruction.

The termination of one course was preparatory for the commencement of another: "And the Lord

God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him an help meet for him"—his counterpart; not like in likeness, but like in difference. As God is a Social Being, so man, fashioned in His image, was intended for society. Therefore the "not good" is privative, not positive; it is the defect of incompleteness, not the imperfection of make or ideal. The continuance of this privative state would eventuate in hurtful results. Consequently God prepares man for the consummation of his creation. By waking within him, not a lustful, but intelligent, desire for human intercourse—the germ of what was afterwards to grow into the white flower of pure, holy love—He took him, as is His wont with rational creatures, into active partnership with Himself. As the animals and birds passed before him, each fitted to be a companion to the other, the question inevitably arose in his mind, possibly to his lips, for innocence always speaks to itself, Why was he an exception? Why was he a singular among all the duals of nature? A sense of separateness stole over him, and simultaneously awoke in his breast a keen yearning for mutual intercourse. The sense of deficiency having been excited, God could now proceed to meet the want, for the law of supply and demand rules in the Kingdom of God as well as in the realm of commerce. Adam having been created a moral creature, endowed with free will, God would not without his passive consent even provide him with a "help meet"—so jealous is He of the liberty of His creature. Now that the longing is roused, the satisfaction of his need follows.

“The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept.” It is no ordinary, but a deep sleep from the Lord, wherein all the bodily members and organs, losing sensation, became practically functionless. The word is used in other passages (Gen. xv. 12; 1 Sam. xxvi. 12) to indicate that kind of sleep in which supernatural dreams and visions are vouchsafed. In the Septuagint it is invariably rendered *ἔκστασις*, a trance, wherein the mind stands, as it were, out of the body, more wakeful in proportion to the profoundness of the physical sleep, and clearly apprehending the process going on. Hence the ancient tradition among the Hebrew people, recorded by Josephus, that the “whole scene of the formation of Eve was visible to the mental eye of Adam.” While Adam was thus asleep, in a kind of hypnotic trance, his body insensible to pain, “the Lord God took one of his ribs”—according to the Targum of Jonathan, the thirteenth from the right side!—“and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man builded He a woman, and brought her unto the man.” The story, doubtless, sounds strange in our ears, and though we have read it scores of times its weirdness never diminishes.

In this language many see only a figurative method of setting forth the truth that woman is of the same essence as man. What we call the essence, the ancients styled the *bone*. Welsh people still speak of the marrow of a subject. No doubt there is much truth in this; but it is not the whole truth. Woman was in a mysterious way taken

out of man, so that man and woman were an arithmetical unity. How was she taken? I cannot tell; it was a miracle, and miracles are not explicable, else they would not be miracles. We must remember that we are moving in the region of the supernatural.

Irreverent scoffers have pronounced the whole transaction unutterably ridiculous; many are the witticisms bandied about at its expense. But revolve the matter well in your minds. What better substitute have you or they to offer? Women are here; the first woman was formed somehow. How? To build her out of clay, as Adam, in popular theology, was created, is perfectly conceivable, and that probably is the method human reason would have suggested. But is to make her out of mud a more respectable way than to form her out of flesh? Is the building of her out of moistened dust a method more honourable and worthier the Divine than to make her out of the bone of the man to whom she was to be indissolubly joined in the holy estate of matrimony? I trow not. Or take the modern evolutionary view, that woman came out of the gorilla or chimpanzee—do you mend matters? Is not the Divine evolution of woman out of man quite as honourable as her undivine evolution out of a monkey? Aye, more reasonable on *a priori* grounds; and more reasonableness is an evidence of greater plausibility, unless facts to the contrary be forthcoming, which here is not the case.

Prompted by unprofitable ingenuity, many good and able men have speculated as to the physical

condition of man in his state of loneliness. Jacob Böhme and the theosophists generally hold that he was androgynous, and had the mystic power of self-propagation. Farther back we find Maimonides, the most philosophic expounder of Judaism, strongly supporting the same view, that "Adam was created man and woman at the same time, having two faces turned in two opposite directions, and that during a stupor the Creator separated Havvâh [Eve], his feminine half, from him, in order to make of her a distinct person." That, it appears, was the rabbinical exposition of the passage under consideration; consequently, some Christian divines believe that to this view the Lord Jesus referred when speaking of man and woman as at their creation of "one flesh." Remarkable that this was the prevalent view among the most advanced nations of antiquity, and the view expounded by Plato in the *Banquet*: "In the beginning there were three sexes among men, not only the two which we still find at this time, male and female, but yet a third, partaking of the nature of each, which has disappeared, leaving only its name behind. In fact, the Androgyn existed then in name and in reality, being a mixture of the male and female sexes, though to-day the name is only used as a reproach. . . . Now, said Jupiter, I will divide [men] into two. . . . Now when their nature had been bisected, each half beheld with a longing its other self"—hence conjugal love. Lenormant evidently adopts this view: "Following our Vulgate Version, which agrees in this with the Greek Version of the Septuagint, we are in the habit of stating that according to the

Bible the first woman was made of a rib taken from Adam's side. Nevertheless, there is serious reason to doubt the exactness of this interpretation. The word *çîlâ* used here signifies in all other passages of the Bible where we meet with it, 'side,' and not 'rib.' Philologically, then, the most probable translation of the text of Genesis is: Yahveh Elohim caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; He took one of his sides, and closed up the place with flesh. And Yahveh Elohim formed the side which He had taken from man into woman, and He led her to the man. . . . So much for the account in the Jehovist document; in the Elohist, we have, in the first place, 'Elohim created man in His image; . . . male and female created He them.' The use of the plural pronoun seems at first sight to suggest the notion of a pair of two distinct individuals. But farther on this pronoun seems, on the contrary, to apply to the nature of a double being, which, being male and female, constituted a single *Âdâm*. 'Male and female created He them, and He blessed them, and named their name *Âdâm*.' The text says *Âdâm*, and not *hâ'âdâm* with the article, and the following verse proves that the word here is taken as an appellation, a proper name, and not as a general designation of the species."¹

But why this futile and vain theorising? Why not accept the unvarnished tale in its simple lyric meaning? The teaching of Moses is, that woman was made, not naturally but supernaturally, out of man. Do we not meet in the New Testament with

¹ *Beginnings of History*, pp. 63-5.

its significant counterpart—man made, not naturally but supernaturally, out of woman?—"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." "In the fulness of time God sent His Son, made of a woman."¹ Those who believe in the Man made of a woman experience no difficulty in giving credence to the story that woman was made out of man. Both are miracles, fitting counterparts one of another.

Waking out of his sleep, and beholding his other self, Adam rapturously exclaimed : "This, now, this at last, this is what I longed for, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh ; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." It is an exclamation of gladsome surprise at the realisation at last of his desires. Dr. Pye Smith renders it : "This is the hit." "And though such a translation," adds he, "may appear strange, and even vulgar, it appears necessary for the preservation of rigorous fidelity. The word properly means a smart, bold, successful *stroke*, and is used to signify *hitting the precise time* of any action or requirement. In this first and primitive instance, it is equivalent to saying, This is the very thing that hits the mark, this reaches what was desired." The joy reveals the sense of loneliness he before experienced ; and when the vacant niche in the heart was suddenly occupied, in the native simplicity of spotless innocence he gave expression to his gladness in an abrupt ejaculation :

¹ Luke i. 35 ; Gal. iv. 4.

"This is it. She shall be called *Isha*, for she was taken out of *Ish*." Some think that they see here the first birth of poetry. Probably; love is always singing.

Thus far the first man has been uniformly styled Adam, or *the* Adam, according to whether man generic or specific is intended. Now, however, a new term is introduced—*Ish*; wherefore, woman is, in the feminine, called *Isha*. Here arises the interesting question, Seeing *Ish* and *Isha* are Hebrew, in which language did Adam speak? It is a question around which much human interest spontaneously gathers, for we would much like to know the caressing words which Adam first addressed to his wife, the language in which they conversed,

As hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam, the goodliest man of men since born,
His sons; the fairest of her daughters, Eve.¹

Havernick writes: "Some have urged that these [*ish* and *isha*] and other names need not be considered original, as they may have been translated into the Hebrew. But that the author at least regarded them as original Hebrew words, and did not permit to himself any meddling with them, appears from the following considerations: (1) The etymologies adduced are opposed to such an opinion, inasmuch as the given interpretations of the proper names are intelligible only on the supposition that these words themselves are Hebrew. These names, with their meanings, form an essential element in the

¹ Milton, Book iv., p. 98

history, and hence the credibility of the latter stands intimately connected with that of the name and its signification. (2) Where names had been altered or translated, we find the practice of noting this carefully observed in Genesis (chaps. xiv. 7, 8, xxiii. 19, xxviii. 19); and from this we may infer that the other proper names are conscientiously retained in the Hebrew idiom; otherwise analogy would have led to the name which had been translated into Hebrew being given in its original form."

One's sympathies naturally side with the grand old Hebrew, and historically it has many precedent claims over other languages. One speech prevailed down to the Deluge; that speech was transmitted to the new world by Noah and his sons, which continued to prevail to the Babel confusion of tongues. One would fain believe that this primitive language was preserved in the line of Heber, and transmitted through Abraham to the Israelites. But this pious opinion, once fondly cherished by many learned men, seems destined to be dissolved in the crucible of philological science. As is well known, one of the striking peculiarities of the Hebrew is its *three-letter* roots, a phenomenon wholly alien to all languages outside the Semitic group. Of late, attempts have been made to trace the three-letter to two-letter roots; and the success, which has attended these researches, has weakened the belief that Hebrew was the original language, and engendered a faint hope that, underneath the present accretions, the primitive substratum will yet be found.

I. In this original institution of marriage, the sacred indissolubleness of the union is clearly incul-

cated, the standard of marital chastity and domestic peace being held aloft in the forefront of human history. "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it," constituted the charter God granted to the first human pair.

This injunction contemplates the distribution of the human species all over the world, and as we look round about us to-day through all the zones, "from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand," we find no region uninhabited by man. Beyond all other creatures, in other respects stronger than he, he possesses powers to adjust himself to his environments, which make him always and everywhere the master of the situation—the creator, not the creature, of circumstances. This universal distribution of the human race is a phenomenon unique in the animal kingdom. Most plants when transplanted, most animals when deported, from the land of their nativity, gradually droop and die. Beyond certain perfectly definable climatic belts they will not prosper and thrive. The anthropoid apes, for instance, the animals whose configuration bears the strongest resemblance to the human frame, are all confined to the tropical area. They lack the hardy endurance and the equilibrating capabilities of human kind. But man's distribution is co-extensive with the globe. He lives, labours, and multiplies on the five continents, gladly braves the rigours and severities of the Frigid Zone, and triumphantly defies the sweltering heat of equatorial climes. "Those other animals," writes Professor Macalister, "which, like the rat, have spread over large tracts of the globe, are characterised by an early maturity, a capacity

of feeding upon almost any form of food, and a rapid rate of multiplication. Man presents us with characteristics in all respects the most diverse from these: he has the longest period of helpless infancy of any animal, and is slow in attaining maturity (one-fourth of his life, at least twenty years, having passed before his full growth is perfected); he is also able to use only a limited number of substances in their natural conditions as food. Mankind also multiply at a slow rate; thus, while within the past fifty years, forty-five persons have descended from a single pair of royal parents in Britain, in the same period of time one pair of rats would, at their ordinary rate of increase, have had a progeny of at least as great numerically as the whole population of England. Yet, in the face of all these disabilities, man has, by his own exertion, become a cosmopolite."

Whilst marriage is thus on the one hand for the sake of the race, on the other it is intended for the discipline and enrichment of the individual life. By love matrimony is elevated to the region of the spirit, and becomes essentially ethical. Without love marriage is mere simulacrum, nothing more than a civil contract, on the low level of a commercial bargain. But by love it is ennobled and transfigured, and becomes symbolical of the deeper verities of the higher life. "This is a great mystery; but of Christ and the Church I speak." As the same law rounds the dewdrop that determines the circle of the sun, so the principle of marriage is fundamentally the same as that of the mystic union between Christ and believers, the Church having

proceeded supernaturally from His bleeding side as the woman proceeded supernaturally from the wounded side of her husband.

Marriage being thus physical and spiritual, the union should remain unimpaired till dissolved in death. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." Whether these words be the remark of Adam or the inspired comment of Moses on the institution of marriage, as is the more probable by the conjunction "therefore,"—his usual mode of introducing his own observations,—their far-reaching significance is equally manifest. The inspired comment, I said, because in the New Testament the words are ascribed to God Himself. Listen to the Saviour's exposition of this Mosaic truth: "The Pharisees also came unto Him, tempting Him, and saying unto Him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder. They say unto Him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He said unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except

it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery : and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery " (Matt. xix. 3-9).

Thus there are traceable in the history of the ordinance of marriage three periods. The first when the union was inviolable—the law as instituted in the time of man's innocence. The second, following upon man's transgression, when God had to relax the law of matrimonial morality. The principle in virtue of which this was permissible is known in theology as that of accommodation. You apply it to the sick. You do not require the same amount of work nor demand the same high standard of excellence from the infirm, the aged, and the decrepit, as you do from those whose health is robust and limbs are athletic. So when mankind fell, and lusts grew wild and passions rank, God in infinite mercy lowered the standard, and permitted conjugal divorcement. The high ideal of wedlock had been universally departed from, wives had become a barterable merchandise. Parents selected partners for their children without considerations of physical beauty or spiritual compatibility ; love, the core of marriage, was non-existent. Under circumstances so deplorable, how could it otherwise be than that family jars and irritations should be frequent and violent ? To prevent these domestic contentions culminating in murder, a law of divorcement was established even in Israel—an improvement on the surrounding Paganism, where not law, but individual caprice, determined the matrimonial relation. Moses, like every wise lawgiver, legislated, not for an ideal, but for an actual state ; consequently he enacted

laws, not absolutely but relatively the best, the best under the prevailing circumstances. This was a period in the history of the world of sad moral degeneracy. With Christianity, however, began a third period, when the law of Paradise is again made supreme. Through the incarnation of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, new life is being gradually infused into the race; and with the possession by humanity of additional strength, of fresh inspiration, the standard of morality is exalted to its Paradisiacal position; and subsequent history testifies to the gradual approximation of men to their once lost, but now restored, ideal.

II. Another lesson of no less importance is taught mankind by this Creation story,—that God created man male and female, one of each sex, and that therefore monogamy should be the law of life.

In reviewing this phase of the question we again perceive three periods parallel with those already discussed. The first is, of course, the Paradisiacal. Had mankind continued in their original perfection, this fundamental law of life would have remained inviolably sacred. But, alas! the animal nature overcame the spiritual, and from being in subjection to, it attained to dominion over, the reason and conscience. As a dire consequence, the bonds of matrimony were unloosed, and polygamy established itself as the uniform custom. Plurality of wives had entered the antediluvian world, as evidenced by the history of Lamech, who dedicated his poem to his two wives, Adah and Zillah. Even in the elect nation polygamy could not be safely forbidden; the Mosaic law aims, therefore, not at its suppression,

but its regulation, so as to inflict on society as slight an injury as possible. But polygamy, or "concubinage," as it is termed in Scripture, does not mean adultery or fornication, the penalty for which in the Mosaic legislation was death; but a legalised marriage, the acknowledgment by statute, as the mouthpiece of public opinion, of plurality of "lawful wedded wives," with the concession to the monogamic principle that the first had the primacy of all the others.

Sad to think of the prevalence of concubinage even in Israel. Nothing can better exhibit the shocking degradation into which mankind had sunk than the legalised relations which obtained between the sexes. So blunted had become the moral sense, that even in the family of the godly concubinage prevailed, not only without censure, but often with the approval of the lawful spouse. Abraham thought polygamy no sin, nor did Jacob condemn it in himself or children. Gideon, the celebrated judge of Israel, had many wives, and threescore and ten sons. The pious Elkanah, the father of Samuel, had two wives. David, the sweet singer of Israel, had several wives, and received the wives of his predecessor on the throne into his harem (2 Sam. xii. 8), not for the indulgence of sinful passions, but as a matter of custom and expediency. Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, not, however, to gratify sensual lust, as is popularly imagined, but to maintain his pre-eminence among Eastern monarchs, the royal pomp being measured in those days by the magnitude and splendour of the royal harem.

To absolutely forbid polygamy, to try to stem this wild, irresistible torrent of sensuality, by a prohibitory statute in the then immature state of the conscience, private and public, would be to court inevitable defeat. To endeavour forthwith to eradicate the evil would be tantamount to the overthrow of the entire race. But what could not be accomplished by direct prohibition, could be partly alleviated by prudent regulation, and its evil results reduced to a minimum. This is all the Mosaic legislation dared attempt. But whilst nothing more patently demonstrates the inherent evil and the unrestrained self-will of man than this riotous trampling under foot of all the pure sanctities of marriage, on the other hand nothing exhibits the power of revealed religion more advantageously than, whilst permitting it as a necessary evil, it has gradually so quickened the moral sensibilities that now, in all Christian communities, plurality of wives is viewed with righteous abhorrence.

With Jesus Christ arrived the third period, His Church again raising aloft the Creation standard of monogamy. By the incarnation of the Divine Son in our nature, and the indwelling of the Divine Spirit in our hearts, the spiritual forces have been rallied, and the ethical principles of wedlock have been vindicated, and marriage is once more a holy ordinance, if not a Divine sacrament.

III. From this story of the creation of one man and one woman, St. Paul draws the inference that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts xvii. 26)

The unity of the human race is practically a demonstrated truth of science. Observing the wide differences between the varieties of mankind, between the African black and the Caucasian white, Agassiz and other Christian scientists felt constrained to the conclusion that, though all men were homogeneous, yet they had separate origins; that God had contemporaneously created divers pairs, in a plurality of localities widely separated from one another. But the more the question is investigated, the more general is the trend of scientific belief that the Mosaic presentation of the facts is correct. Marvelous the change of opinion which has come over rationalistic scientists on this subject! Formerly they were wont to stoutly maintain that the differences between the various races were so great, that it was impossible they could have descended from a single pair. To-day they assert that not only all men, but all men and all animals alike, are indisputably the offspring of a single progenitor. What they pronounced impossible forty years ago, they consider an established verity to-day. And yet this is the science in favour of which we are bidden to turn our backs on the Bible. How sober the Mosaic account compared with these wild theories! how carefully it avoids the extremes which exert such powerful fascination over scientific minds!

That Moses here states the exact truth is confirmed by considerations based on the physical nature of men. That the difference is great between the Negro and the Greek, the Malaysian and the Teuton, is incontrovertibly plain. But when we remember that in Adam and Eve was lodged

humanity in its entirety, and therefore all possible germs of mental and physical developments ; and that man, beyond every other creature, has power to adjust himself to his surroundings, these adjustments effecting gradual modifications of his animal structure ; the organic variations, however marked, are not wholly inexplicable, not beyond the pale of probability. But the fact which weighs most, perhaps, is that when men and women, at the extreme poles of divergence, are united in marriage, their offspring increase in all the prolific qualities, without any signs of physical or mental deterioration, but rather exhibit an increase of strength. As remarked in a former chapter, hybrids are struck with barrenness, they all die off with the first generation ; but cross-breeding among men results in the improvement of the species, thus showing that fundamentally the five races of men are one ; and that Moses is right in teaching that all men are members of one family, and that consequently good-will should prevail among them, based on the fact of universal brotherhood.

But mind, even more than body, is the most determinate characteristic of men ; and nothing is more evident than that all minds are fundamentally the same. Draw a map of the human mind, and it will bear scrutiny in the five zones. The laws of logic dominate in Africa as they do in Europe. The same psychological text-books, which we place in the hands of our young men, need not be changed in a single iota in the universities of India. Algebra and Euclid are as intelligible in China as they are in England. This universal prevalence of the same

mental laws among the Malaysians and the Caucasians, among the Hottentots and the Eskimo, powerfully indicates sameness of origin, in accordance with the Mosaic teaching.

When we penetrate into the moral region, the evidence continues to gather in volume and strength. The will, the heart, the conscience are everywhere the same; so that the saying is true that the white man is God's image in ivory, and the black man His image in ebony. The will is free in every climate; love finds its home in every bosom; and conscience, whenever and wherever awakened, answers to the same voice, and acknowledges the same obligations. Man is one in his Fall, one also in his Redemption. Sin is the same the world over, and in every country Grace triumphs. The legend tells us that, on the expulsion of our first parents from Eden, the cherubim smashed the Gates of Paradise; and that so violent were the blows, the fragments flew all over the world. This is spiritually true. Fragments of Paradisiacal truth have doubtless been scattered wherever mankind have travelled; portions are clearly discernible in the religions of China, of India, of Persia, and of Arabia. Their original glow and sparkle is still seen amid the incrustations of superstition and vice; but by-and-by all these fragments will be gathered together, and welded into one homogeneous whole, and there shall be "one flock and one Shepherd." The unity of the human race is reflected in the unity of truth, and consummated in the unity of the way of Salvation.

IV. Closely connected with the unity of mankind is the question of their *antiquity*. Biblical chrono-

logy continues in a state of uncertainty, the principle on which the ages of men are calculated having not yet been fully elucidated. Consequently a margin of one or two thousand years is not unreasonable. But so far as inquiries into this subject have been pushed, there is a consensus of opinion that Moses teaches the existence of man for about six to eight thousand years, and no longer. Scientific sceptics have for nearly a century been heaping obloquy on the Mosaic chronology, ridiculing the time-penury of Moses as compared with the scores, yea, the hundreds of thousands of years accorded to man by ethnic history and geological investigations. Nothing carries home more convincingly to the mind the thorough reliableness of the Mosaic records than to see Science, in its infant days demanding for man a history stretching backward hundreds of thousands of years, in its more mature days obliged to confess that, after all its wild and extravagant hypotheses, Moses' chronology may yet prove to be true. Prodigal sciences, like prodigal sons, at last return home.

Earlier in the century the opponents of Biblical revelation strove hard to discredit the Mosaic chronology by appealing to the histories of other nations. Chinese astronomy was alleged to go back at least fifteen thousand years. Professor Legge, however, the greatest living authority on Chinese literature, declares, without fear of contradiction, that China has no authentic history before 1154 B.C.—just about the time of the exodus from Egypt, though their "Book of History" may contain true traditions extending back a thousand years earlier.

Another attempt was made to marshal Babylonia and Assyria as witnesses against the Hebrew chronology. Berosus, the Babylonian priest, a contemporary of Malachi, was sought after to demolish Moses, the Hebrew lawgiver. Is it not evidence of grave moral obliquity that learned men should show readiness to believe Berosus in preference to Moses? What has Moses done to excite against him the bitter antagonism of these men who cry, Not Moses, but Berosus? But Professor Rawlinson says that the allegation that sidereal observations had been made at Babylon for above four hundred and fifty thousand years, is sufficiently met by the fact that, when Aristotle commissioned his disciple, Callisthenes, to obtain for him the astronomical lore of Babylon, on Alexander's occupation of the city, the observations were found to extend, not to four hundred and fifty thousand years, but to nineteen hundred and three. Professor Sayce, after an exhaustive examination, pronounces the opinion that no tablets or monuments can claim a greater antiquity than about four thousand four hundred years. Moses still stands honoured and revered, whereas the Berosus' long-lived dynasties are demonstrated to be fanciful inventions.

Later, driven away from China, and from Assyria and Babylonia, rationalistic writers have sought refuge in Egypt. Manetho, the Egyptian priest, living a century later than Malachi, was led forth to testify against Moses. According to him, the Egyptian dynasties had continued unbroken for thirty thousand years. His testimony was to be preferred to that of Moses. Then the assertions of Manetho found

support in the sculptured zodiacs in certain Egyptian temples, declared by experts to be seventeen thousand years old! The discomfiture of Moses was pronounced complete. Champollion, however, the first to decipher the hieroglyphics, translated the zodiacs, and, behold! the famous zodiac of Denderah, which was alleged to have undermined the trustworthiness of Genesis, was only contemporaneous with the reign of Augustus Cæsar, while that of Emch belonged to the age of Antoninus!

One is amazed at the readiness with which the romances of heathen writers are swallowed and defended by able men, for no other conceivable reason or motive than the disparagement of Moses. The more, however, ancient contemporary histories are criticised, the more secure sits Moses in his seat. So many violent attempts have been made to dislodge him without the slightest success, that the faith has been engendered in some of us that present and future attempts in the same direction are doomed to the same inane failure.

Historic science failing them, writers of anti-supernaturalistic tendencies sought confirmation to the extreme antiquity of mankind in natural science. Here again mental intoxication set in. Man was declared to live in pre-glacial times. If human remains were found in the same deposit as that of the mammoth, then man must have existed in the mammoth age. It did not occur to them to argue the other way, that the mammoth must have lived down to the human age. That, however, is Professor Owen's verdict: "The present evidence does not necessitate the carrying back the date of

man in past time, so much as bringing the extinct post-glacial animals towards our own time." Sir J. W. Dawson sums up his examination of these theories in these words: "What evidence the future may bring forth I do not know, but that available at present points to the appearance of man, with all his powers and properties, in the post-glacial age of Geology, and not more than from six thousand to eight thousand years ago."¹ And as late as 1894, at a meeting of the British Association of Science, Professor Boyd-Dawkins and Sir John Evans, the two men most competent to pronounce an authoritative opinion, declared that no proofs are forthcoming in support of the theory of glacial or pre-glacial man. Moses and Science once more stand shoulder to shoulder! Berosus and Manetho have fallen discredited; Moses stands, though often impeached, with his character unsoiled and his authority unshaken. How to account for this miracle of history?

Others, again, base their argument against the Mosaic chronology on the long period of time necessarily required for the growth of languages, and the development of the arts which embellish civilised life. Assuming that man once sucked an ape and began life a speechless savage, the demand for longer reaches of time for him to unfold his faculties is by no means extravagant. But that is simply begging the question, taking for granted the very point in dispute. But on the Mosaic hypothesis that man began life, not as a savage, but in a state of civilisation, and richly endowed

¹ *Fossil Man*, p. 246.

with the gift of speech, the received chronology seems to meet all the requirements of the case. If from the Latin of imperial Rome, under the eye of Christian civilisation and enlightenment, have sprung Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, mutually unintelligible, notwithstanding the conservative restraints imposed on language by literature, written and printed, it is not beyond the bounds of credibility that the three thousand languages and dialects prevailing to-day should have all emerged from the one primordial tongue in the course of the millenniums. The more thoroughly these questions are sifted, the more firmly grows the conviction that the Mosaic teaching concerning the comparatively recent origin of man is right. At the commencement of these inquiries Science gets intoxicated, makes extravagant statements; but, in each case, as researches are further carried, she is gradually sobered, and has reluctantly to recant. Moses still holds his ground, alone calm and immovable amid the strife of words and the clash of theories.

CHAPTER VIII

MAN'S INNOCENCE AND PROBATION

MANY moderns strongly incline to the view that the story of the Fall is a myth. All other nations have their myths; the records of their infancy are not histories, but the spontaneous, unconscious growths of imagination running riot, before the critical faculty is excited. If that be true of all other nations, why make an exception of the Hebrews? They also were men subject to the same mental laws as other people.

It is observable, however, that the advocates of the mythical theory do not tell us what they precisely mean by a myth, and a great deal of confusion arises from lack of definition. Much of what passes for broad thought is loose thought; laxity is mistaken for breadth. These writers speak glibly of philosophical and historical myths: what is the difference? So far as I can judge, in a philosophical myth the facts grow out of the ideas. Individual thinkers, or the collective thinkers, of early ages form certain conceptions of the nature and sequence of things; to express these abstract thoughts they consciously or unconsciously embody them in fictitious narratives; these manufactured narratives are then

transmitted to subsequent ages as veritable, real history. The ideas create the facts. In a historical myth, on the other hand, the ideas are the investiture of the facts either by growth from within or transference from without. There is a substratum of facts, but the facts are swollen, exaggerated, multiplied by the excited imagination always on the look out for the marvellous, till the history becomes wholly untrustworthy. Either way the antediluvian chapters of Genesis are declared undeserving of confidence. This theory leaves us in total ignorance of all that transpired before the Deluge—a theory which I for one cannot accept. But why should the Hebrew account be regarded differently from the myths of other nations? A sufficient reason, I believe, is found in the consideration that, if God was pleased to elect the Hebrews to be the depositaries of the truth concerning God and man, as many of the advocates of the mythical theory admit, it is not probable that facts of the greatest moment in the life of the race, such as our creation, temptation, and fall, would be wholly overlooked. And if given at all, they might as well be given in a true as in a fictitious garb.

Is the Genesis account, then, to be considered poetry? Here again the question arises, What is poetry? Whatever it is, it cannot be the contradiction of history, but rather its interpretation; not the denial of truth, but its highest, completest expression. In this sense I have no objection to view these chapters as poetry, for poetry is the truest history, history written from the inside rather than from the outside, and therefore incomparably truer

than what often passes as history in the schools. When a boy I read the history of Richard III. in the school-books of the period ; I knew the date of his birth and of his death, the dates of all his battles, and could write an essay on his life. A little later I read Shakespeare's play of Richard, and for the first time I understood the English king. Shakespeare unravelled the history of the inner man, told how the king thought and felt, showed the workings of his heart and brain. I have known Richard ever since, Shakespeare's tragedy being a truer picture of Richard than Green's history. But the tragedy is not a contradiction of the history, rather its explanation and transfiguration. The first chapters of Genesis are poetry, undiluted poetry ; but on that account they need not cease to be history. Cannot poetry be history, and history poetry ? Chateaubriand regards the Mosaic account as poetry ; Professor Stanley Leathes, on the other hand, takes it "for what it undoubtedly is, plain and simple prose."¹ I perceive no contradiction or disagreement between the two views—poetry may be history, and history poetry. Do you know anything more poetical, more tragical, than the history of Great Britain ? When the right poet will arise to present our campaigns of conquest and our wars in defence and for the extension of liberty, the promiscuous struggles of voters at the election booths, and the noisy battles of eloquence on the floors of the two Houses of Parliament, he need not invent or fabricate—the materials will be ready-made to his hand. All he will have to do will be

¹ *Structure of the Old Testament*, p. 123.

to marshal his facts, and array them in language fitting and picturesque, like the uniform of the British soldier.

All nations look back to a golden age of the world, a Paradisiacal period in the history of the race. But why was that age golden? Because the actual and ideal then kissed; history was poetry, and poetry history. Among the nations of antiquity the Hebrews alone look forward to another golden age when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and the leopard like an ox will eat grass. Christian nations have caught this optimistic tone from the Hebrews, and are now expectant of a period when poetry and history, long divorced, will again embrace; when the actual and ideal, now gradually approaching, will finally meet and coalesce.

I. Looking, therefore, upon these chapters as both poetically and historically true, let us contemplate man in the state of his *innocence*, as he came fresh from the hands of his Maker, in the initial stage of his development.

His physical nature is perfect, without weakness or flaw. In our bodies there lurk the seeds of disorder. These seeds have not yet developed, and by proper care may not work in us irreparable mischief. Nevertheless they are here, a source of peril and anxiety to us as long as we live. Adam, however, was thoroughly free from all germs of sickness. By this is not intended that his body was created intrinsically immortal. That is the view, perhaps, popularly taken; but students of our nature say that the organs of the body would,

in the nature of things, wear themselves out, that the human machine would of necessity stop revolving. In consonance with science, the Bible, as I understand it, assumes that physical immortality was not a native endowment, but was to be superadded as the reward of holiness. The immortality of man, in the totality of his being, according to the Bible, has its foundation in ethics, not physics. The soul was created immortal, but the body mortal : that is the teaching of Moses as well as Plato. But before the eyes of man God held out the hope of the immortality of the body ; which, however, was to be the gift of God as a reward of true-hearted loyalty. As death was to be the wages of sin, so exemption from death was to be the reward of obedience. Had Adam not yielded to temptation he would have never died, not because his corporeal nature was endowed with physical immortality, but because God had ordained means whereby, as a sign of His favour for moral steadfastness, his life might be indefinitely prolonged. These means were connected with, probably embodied in, the Tree of Life in the midst of the Garden.

How should this Tree of Life be viewed ? Did it occupy this position, and possess this virtue, simply as the result of Divine appointment ? In other words, had God not so ordained, would it differ in nothing from ordinary trees ? Did God take any apple tree, and by arbitrary enactment make it a Tree of Life, without any miraculous metamorphosis of the tree ? Of course, no limits can be laid to the Divine Omnipotence, except those prescribed by the Divine Wisdom. Possibly those

theologians are right who maintain that the virtue lay wholly, not in the tree itself, but in the Divine ordainment. But personally I favour the other view. The preferences of God have always a basis in fact—God does all things, not according to the caprice, but the counsel, of His will. This tree was probably generically different from all other trees. What the difference was surpasses our power to discover ; but emphatically it was a Tree of Life—by participation in the juice of its fruit or the sap of its bark the physical life would be invigorated and prolonged. More than any other passage the Divine colloquy in Gen. iii. 22, 23 sheds light upon it : “Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil : and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and *live for ever!*” An intimation is here contained that the fruit of this tree had the power to impart bodily immortality, apart from all considerations of holiness of character ; but through sin man forfeited his right to partake thereof. Did God gather together into this tree in the centre of the Garden the quintessence of all cosmical life, thereby constituting its juice the veritable elixir of immortality, and once more illustrating that history and poetry embrace? In the prosecution of industrial and mechanical avocations, inevitable was it that accidents should occur, that the chisel should cut the flesh, and the stone crush the foot—the belief of Albertus Magnus, notwithstanding, that the first man would have felt no pain, though he had been stoned with heavy stones ; but in the leaves of the Tree of Life was medicine for all his sicknesses. Now

healing virtues are distributed in a hundred plants and more, specific plants being remedies for specific diseases; but in the Tree of Life were probably concentrated the medicinal virtues of all the vegetable creation, and special virtues of its own in addition, and thus it was a universal panacea against all evil. Was it not in this the Creation symbol of the Gospel Tree of Life, "which bears twelve manner of fruit, each month giving its fruit, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations"? "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people." Thus man's corporeal immortality was not a native endowment, but was to be superadded in consequence of participation in the Tree of Life, which participation was to be permitted as the reward of dutiful obedience.

Man's intellect was a worthy inhabitant of his physical tenement, perfect in all its faculties harmonious in all its emotions. By this, however, is not to be understood that his mind was replete in respect of contents, for obviously there was a moment in his history when no truth consciously dwelt within him. On the other hand, there was no error, no depravity, no impurity in the cask to taint ever afterwards with its bitter taste all the sweet waters. His was a perfectly transparent mind in a perfectly sound body.

Neither was he left to the uncertain gropings of his own unaided faculties—God became his tutor. What more consistent than that the God, who showed such solicitude in his creation, should con-

tinue His special guardianship, and Himself undertake his education? Be the story true or not, it is certainly harmonious, and harmony is one of the indubitable notes of truth.

What then was the educational process? Did God fill the first man with knowledge ready-made? Certainly not; but by a combination of circumstances He set revolving his mental faculties—He made him *think*. “And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.” In education, as is well known, there are two methods of teaching. The first crams the mind with information, converting the mind into a warehouse where facts of every kind are safely stored. This is an excellent method to pass examinations as now conducted, which gauge your stores of knowledge rather than measure your powers of thought. Hence many a young man, whose university career was most brilliant, falls behind in the race of life, where ability, not memory—originality, not receptivity—counts. There is another method, deemed by all competent judges to be superior. According to this the teacher endeavours to make the child think. He does not supply him with manufactured knowledge, but strives to induce him to discover truth for himself. This was also the Divine method in the instruction of the first man—God did not so much put in as draw out. He did not take Adam, saying, This is the name of this creature, and that is the name of the second; but

He brought the animals to Adam "to see what he would call them"—He made Adam think, and thought is the mother of speech. Adam gazed on the animals, thought into their nature, and as he thought so he named them. Adam thought deep down into the roots of things and of language.

Pleasant is it further to reflect that man's moral nature rhymed beautifully with his intellectual and physical nature. The greatest harmony prevailed in this human trinity. But to represent man as standing perpendicularly between God and Satan, perfectly neutral between good and evil, is hardly correct, indeed not correct at all. In his creation the inclination of his nature was in the direction of virtue; his instincts all moved Godward. His heart gravitated towards God. A natural affinity obtained between the human and the Divine, between the spirit of man and the soul of goodness. As since the Fall human nature leans to the side of evil, so before the Fall it inclined to the side of virtue. The Fall reversed the natural inclination of our nature. This natural bias towards God and goodness the older theologians styled original righteousness; and the natural proneness of human nature to evil they named original sin. But in neither case is the original tantamount to the acquired.

Be it then clearly apprehended that the human heart at its creation was not an empty vessel, to be gradually filled with love to God or love to sin. It was already full. Love is the first experience of man. The babe learns to love before he learns anything else; his little heart bubbles up with love to his mother before a single idea finds conscious

lodgment in his intellect. True, it is but the love of instinct; yet by degrees love of instinct will develop into love of will. Similarly with Adam. He possessed love to his Creator—love of instinct it may be, but love nevertheless; and here emerges the question, How to develop love of instinct into love of will? How to convert the love, which has its origin in human nature, into love having its root in human liberty?

“God created man in His image, after His likeness.” Most of the Greek fathers, misled probably by the Septuagint translation, which, departing from the Hebrew, puts the copulative conjunction between “image” and “likeness,” argued that a difference obtains between the two terms. Subtle and ingenious were the distinctions they drew. Neither are many modern theologians content with the view that the two words are synonyms, added for the sake of weight and emphasis. Some say that the difference is that the “image” denotes the spiritual substance of the soul, whereas the “likeness” refers to the moral character, which is detachable from the substance. In accordance with this view, man through sin lost the “likeness,” the moral qualities analogous to the Divine moral attributes becoming obliterated. Instead of affinity there came repulsion. The “image,” nevertheless, continued, the substance of the spirit remained intact; hence men after the Fall are said to be in the Divine image, though not in the Divine likeness. The spiritual substance persists, the moral character has disappeared. Others assume that the “image” indicates man in his original created state, and “likeness” man as he was destined to be

in the future as the result of a continued course of development, man after having reached his full moral stature. "God created man in His image": that is man at the beginning of his career, man in a state of innocence, man in the actual, before his nature began to unfold its hidden potentialities. "In His likeness": that is man as he was intended to be, man in a condition of holiness, man after having reached the Divine ideal, at the topmost goal of his development. One is the acorn, the other the full-grown oak. And here we encounter the same problem as before, How to make the acorn grow into the oak? How to make the actual man arrive at his ideal? How to elevate a state of innocence into a state of holiness? In other words, How to transmute the goodness, which has its origin in human nature, into goodness having its root in human liberty? How to develop love of instinct into love of will? The problem of the will here emerges, the crux of the theology as well as of the philosophy of the Fall.

II. This has led us to man in a state of *probation*.

It should never be forgotten that the will is the only fount of ethics, that nothing is moral which does not proceed from the will. Man, therefore, being essentially a moral creature, subject to moral law, it is of prime importance that the will be rightly developed. But how to develop the will? We have already seen how the body and mind were developed—namely, by exercise. Precisely in the same manner is the will to be drawn out and strengthened—by calling upon it to choose between good and evil, good and evil in their initial stages, in their lowest, easiest forms. This precisely is the purport

of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil ; and because it takes its place so naturally at the beginning of the story of human evolution—and not only so naturally, but so necessarily—I view the account, not as a fanciful, mythical embellishment, but as literal history ; and the more literal, the more poetical and philosophical. Its philosophy demonstrates its historicity. What manual labour was to Adam in Paradise—means to strengthen his body ; what the secrets of animal nature were to his mind—means to invigorate his intellectual faculties : that, and nothing else, was the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil to his will—a simple but indispensable means to awaken it into healthful exercise, to start it rightly on a course of moral development. It was a tree of moral, not intellectual, knowledge, placed necessarily at the threshold of ethical evolution to train and guide the human will aright. In Hebrew thought the essence of knowledge is not intellectuality, but morality ; not metaphysics, but ethics.

The popular idea is that God in His pure sovereignty, without any necessity, placed this stumbling-block on the way of our progress in goodness ; and that, if He had not made the appointment, men would not have sinned. The probation is looked upon as a superfluous appendage to man's history, arbitrarily added by the Creator. The prohibition to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is viewed as a positive commandment, *i.e.* an enactment capriciously enjoined by God in the exercise of His sovereignty, without any necessity for it, and which we slyly think it

were somewhat better for Him, and a great deal better for us, if it had never been given at all. The popular idea, however, is essentially misleading. That it was positive in the sense that God could give a different test is true; but if man were to grow in morality, it could be done only by bringing him face to face with an edict enjoining this, forbidding that. This rock of offence was on our way already; and all God did was to indicate its place by erecting upon it this commandment like a lighthouse, to warn man not to run his little vessel upon its jagged teeth. Parental mercy, not pedagogic severity, it was which put up the lighthouse. The cross-roads, where good and evil begin to separate, were not planned by the Divine Sovereignty; they existed in the eternal nature of things. All that God did was to put up the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil as a fingerpost on the crossing, and on it inscribed in large legible letters, The way of obedience is the way of life; the way of disobedience is the way of death. Was it not love in the Almighty to set up the fingerpost? Every rational creature must travel past these cross-roads, where good and evil begin to separate, and make his choice accordingly. The angels journeyed this way, a mighty host. One section took to the right, and are to-day established for ever in purity and peace; the other section took to the left, and are now bound in chains of darkness, reserved unto the judgment of the great day. Imperative was it that men should also pass along the same road; but so great was God's solicitude for our welfare, and His anxiety that we should

develop safely past the dangerous crisis of our history, that He erected a fingerpost on the crossing to caution us against taking to the path of self-will: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The God of the Bible is not given to cunning, ensnaring man by craftiness into evil; but open-hearted, open-minded, and in the condescending power of love setting up the Tree of Knowledge, not to hinder, but to help, our development in goodness and felicity. The same tender love, which afterwards erected the Tree of the Cross on Calvary, to deliver man from under the dominion of sin, set up the Tree of Knowledge to preserve man from lapsing into its power. This same love extends in a continuous unbroken stream from Adam to Christ, from Eden to Calvary—at the beginning small and still, at its consummation broad and irresistible. In the Mosaic teaching are visible the tender fibres of the more mature Christian theology. The realm of morals is subject to a law of development as real as that which governs in the kingdom of nature.

A trial-command being necessary in the nature of things, God is represented as reducing it into as simple and easy an ordeal as possible. Any hard task, such as a sudden summons to the first man to choose between good and evil in their higher and more complex forms, would transcend his will-power, hitherto lying dormant. The trial should be on the level of his experience, and strictly within the scope of his capacity. On this ground alone is the simplicity of the probation explicable. "And God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of

the garden thou mayest freely eat ; but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat ; for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Can you conceive a simpler, easier ordeal? I candidly confess, I cannot. I can easily imagine a severer test, but I cannot picture a simpler. If God had commanded him to abstain wholly from all food for twenty-four hours, if He had forbidden him to partake of the fruit of any tree for that space of time, the trial would have been a trifle severer, though not very severe even then. But the actual test is incomparably easier—so easy that it demands abstinence only from one tree, whilst free access is accorded to all other trees. The extreme simplicity of the test suggests the divineness of its origin : man writing from the riches of his imagination would assuredly have fixed on a more difficult task. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest *freely* eat ; but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat of it." Of *every* tree except *one*. What could be simpler? The test lies on the level of moral childhood. The devil in the temptation was harping on the one tree interdicted ; he said nothing about the thousand and one trees allowed. Prohibition to eat of one, permission to eat of the thousand—that was the ordeal, and human imagination may be challenged to invent an easier. If man therefore fell, he fell without the slightest provocation, and is for ever without excuse.

But was not the prohibition in itself an incitement to evil? If this objection were valid, legislation of any kind were inexpedient, and government would

become impossible. Law properly understood represses, not encourages, evil. St. Paul, it is true, declares that the law wrought in him all manner of concupiscence. Socrates also says that he never had any desire to travel beyond the boundaries of Athens till an edict was promulgated that he should be confined within its walls. Similarly Charles Lamb testifies that, walking in a garden with liberty to eat freely of any fruit he liked except the one luscious peach ripening against the wall, he felt a strong longing for the one fruit forbidden. "Stolen waters are sweet." This experience is true to human nature, but to human nature warped and defiled, in which disorderly desires already exist; in a heart pure and upright there is no evil propensity to respond to external solicitations. What to a dishonest man might be an incitement to robbery, in the heart of a man of sound probity would find no echo. The Divine interdict, therefore, was neither cause nor occasion, direct or indirect, to rebelliousness on the part of our first parents.

Not only was the test as simple as Divine Wisdom could make it, but the environments were in every way favourable to a successful issue. Were Adam, an innocent, inexperienced man, forbidden to eat of the fruit of any tree, whilst exposed to the scorching heat of day or the shivering cold of night, and suffering from the keen pangs of hunger or thirst, his continuance in his original integrity could hardly be expected. Hardly, I say, for we read of One, who in the midst of the dreary wilderness, far away from human habitations, surrounded by wild beasts, enduring the sharp paroxysms of hunger consequent

on His long fast of forty days and forty nights, yet successfully resisted temptation, refusing to partake of food except in strict accordance with the Divine Will—a triumph of virtue, under disadvantageous circumstances, unparalleled in the annals of the race. But Adam was placed in a garden; his bodily appetences were abundantly satisfied and his surroundings were in every way excellent. He had every aid to go through his probation triumphantly. Many a man cannot be as good and pure and wholesome as he might, because of his unclean, dismal, ungodly surroundings, which act like a heavy drag upon his better aspirations. Adam, on the contrary, had no adverse circumstances to contend with—he was a sinless man, with ideal environments, in a perfect abode. The trial was reduced to a minimum, whilst the advantages were multiplied to a maximum. Can you imagine an improvement in one single iota? To suggest that the trial should be dispensed with altogether is simply to demand the impossible. Given a rational creature, a trial of some kind is a necessity; for there can be no development of the moral nature without self-determination, a decisive act of free will, and this is possible only in the presence of a command.

But why not a moral command? For the obvious reason that the positive must always precede the moral, that the reign of the external prepares the way for the dominance of the internal. That is the case in the family. Through a series of positive commands, issuing from the father or mother, or both, the child is trained to apprehend the moral; and if failure ensue in the positive, much more would it in

the moral sphere. The same principle is followed in the Divine education of the world at large. The Mosaic legislation for the religious culture of Israel is chiefly positive, to train mankind to habits of obedience. When these habits are formed, the outward ceremonialism is dismissed, and men are thrown back upon their inner moral principles; under the Christian dispensation men are guided by the inner law written in the heart. The dog is not allowed to follow freely his own impulses—he is broken in, trained, disciplined by a series of positive commands and prohibitions, which are not contrary to instinct. The canine nature is seen to better advantage in the dog carefully trained by positive commandments than in the dog running wild in the streets. Thus man had in him the dormant capacity for highest morality. That, instead of being a reason for permitting him to work out at random his instincts, constituted a reason why he should be trained, disciplined, and taught obedience—not obedience simply to his own impulses, but obedience in the sense of submission to a higher Will, external to himself. In this alone morality first emerges. Human nature shows to better advantage trained than untrained, and it cannot be trained except in the presence at the outset of positive regulations. The first postulate of morality is the recognition of a higher Will.

The object in view, as already intimated, in the subjection of man to a disciplinary course, prescribed by an external Will, was the fortifying of his will in favour of God and goodness. In the development of the human will two stages are discernible.

The first is that wherein the will blindly follows instinct—a state of unconsciousness of good. But that is not the highest form of character. By freely, deliberately resolving in favour of good, and in antagonism to evil, the will gradually fuses with goodness, and reaches the second permanent stage of its development—not a state of unconsciousness *of* good, but a state of unconsciousness *in* good. Thus through the identification of the will with the propensities, and all with goodness, a state of perfect freedom is attained, resembling the freedom of the Supreme. God possesses infinite liberty of will, restricted by nothing outside His own nature—He is infinitely free to choose; but His will is so inextricably bound up with goodness that it is impossible for Him to choose evil. Had Adam endured the trial in a spirit of obedience, he would have gradually mounted up to the enjoyment of liberty in the Divine likeness—a state in which it would not be possible for him to sin.

With the Christian, his nature already rent and torn asunder by sin, the problem is, How to make the instincts move along the rails of the will? His will, since conversion, is determined for good; it unmistakably points to God as the magnetic needle to the pole, with probably slight variations and disturbances; but always in calm weather, when the storms of the passions have subsided and the allurements of sense have passed away, it settles steadfastly in the direction of God. His instincts, however, rebel and gravitate earthward. "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . . For I delight in the law of

God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. vii. 19-23). In the case of the Christian the problem consequently is, How to make the instincts move on the lines of the will, the law of the members obey the law of the spirit?

In the case of the first man, however, the problem was the very reverse, to wit, How to make the will move in the direction of the instincts? The instincts like young tendrils were all climbing Godward and heavenward. The history of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is only an account of the Divine Method of training the human will in the same direction, so that, instead of the will depending on the instincts, they, like Virginia creepers, might cling to it, finding in it their sure support, and adorning it with all the beautiful flowers of Eden. Thus the natural and moral would become one; and in this oneness man would attain perfect liberty—not liberty from law, but liberty in law, liberty similar to that of the swallow on the wing. Liberty, swallow: in Hebrew the two words are the same (*děrvōr*). Behold the swallow of a summer evening: how swiftly she shoots through the serene air, how gracefully she curves to the right and to the left, how elegantly she soars upwards or darts downwards! She is the very embodiment of the idea of liberty. This was the kind of freedom Adam was destined to enjoy had he remained loyal to his Maker; and the trial command was given on purpose to lead him on to the higher reaches of this liberty,

to that exalted region where the nature of man melts into the soul of goodness, and the will of man surrenders itself wholly to the will of God, so that temptation would fall irresponsive at his feet, finding in him, body, soul, and spirit, not one vulnerable point.

God's probation of Adam was graciously designed to lead to his progress in holiness and advancement in happiness; the devil's temptation it was which led to his downfall and sin: a distinction which should be always borne in mind.

CHAPTER IX

THE TEMPTATION AND FALL

WE cannot escape from the question, Is this account to be viewed as myth, legend, poetry, or history? It strikes one at once that, if it be not unworthy or puerile as myth or poetry, it cannot be incongruous or unnatural as history.

I. Waiving for the present the discussion of the central facts, there are subsidiary considerations which at least suggest, if they do not justify, its historic truth. Mention is made of two trees, the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; it is affirmed that a serpent seduced our first parents by persuading them to eat of the forbidden fruit, and that, listening to the blandishments of the tempter in preference to the voice of God, they fell into sin, and thence into wretchedness. Turning to heathen mythologies, we find all these features reproduced, not with the same moral proportion and mental sobriety, but still with their resemblance unmistakable.

Take, to begin with, the Babylonian tradition, in which various references are made to the serpent. Mr. Chad Boscawen's recent book contains an impression of a Babylonian seal, discovered by the

lamented Mr. George Smith, and now exhibited in the British Museum, giving a pictorial representation of the Temptation, almost identical with the samplers wrought in thread by our grandmothers, and still hanging on the walls of our country houses. Two human figures are limned, sitting one on each side of a tree, from the branches of which are suspended bunches of luscious fruit, and, behind the woman, rearing his head above hers in the direction of the fruit, is the undulating form of a serpent. What Moses says in words the Babylonian seal teaches in symbols. Take again the following Babylonian hymn, composed at a date anterior to the seventeenth century before Christ—that is, about or before the time Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees :

That which was forbidden by my God,
with my mouth I ate;
That which was forbidden by my goodness,
in my ignorance I trampled upon.

Again in the same hymn :

The forbidden thing did I eat;
The forbidden thing did I trample upon.

Again, if we examine the Aryan traditions the basal notes are the same. They expatiate on the fertile garden on the tableland of Asia, with its two trees and four rivers. In that garden the first pair began life, exempt from guilt, free from turpitude, holding fellowship with Vishnu (the Sanskrit God). At last, listening to the enticements of *naga*, a serpent—a term in which some have detected an echo of the Hebrew word *nachash*—they kept not

their first estate, but fell under the dominion of evil. At length, however, the serpent's head is trampled under the foot of a strong man of the human race, and his influence thereby destroyed—a distinct echo of the promise of the Seed of the Woman to bruise the serpent's head.

In the Persian records the resemblances are still more striking. In them also is portrayed a garden, where is "neither day nor night, nor icy wind nor burning heat, nor sickness which is the cause of numerous deaths, nor defilement produced by the *dævas*." In the midst lies a placid lake, from which the waters of immortality flow forth in four rivers. The two mystic trees are growing there also, possessing extraordinary qualities for good or for evil. "In this garden, Yama, the first man passes his existence in the enjoyment of Edenic blessedness, till falling into sin he is cast out and given up to the power of the serpent, who finally brings about his death by horrible torments. A later form of the legend makes the first pair live one thousand years in abiding fellowship with Ormuzd (the good God), humble in heart, pure in thought, word, and deed, free from every evil and defect, and anticipating heaven as the reward of their continued innocence. By-and-by, however, an evil demon sent by Ahriman (the wicked God), and assuming the guise of a serpent, intrudes himself into their peaceful abode. First, he instils into their minds suspicious thoughts concerning Ahuramazda; then, becoming bolder, offers them the fruit of the wonderful Tree of Life, or of another tree which he causes to spring up beside it; and finally completes their seduction. As a conse-

quence evil inclinations arise within their hearts, their moral excellence departs, the happiness which they have hitherto enjoyed disappears, they are banished from their garden home. Becoming dwellers in the bleak and sterile country beyond the precincts of Paradise, they betake themselves to hunting, and begin to clothe themselves with the skins of wild beasts.”¹

In all these legends do you not clearly discern distinct echoes of the Mosaic history of the Fall? How to account for these striking similarities? Evidently they were not the creations of these several nations in independence of each other—they must have had one common source in the remote past. Myths or legends analogous to each other, giving embodiment to general truths, may simultaneously grow up, without international relations, in different countries. Myths concerning the Fall may thus arise. A restlessness characterises man, wherever he dwells and whichever state he is in. Be he rich or poor, learned or illiterate, the discord pervades his life, and deeper than the dissonance is the protest against it. How to account for this discordant condition? Men, howsoever divided, are constrained by one common force to attribute it to a moral cataclysm somewhere near the source of human history. Myths spring up independently of each other, but similar in import and construction, because proceeding from one common underground of experience. But when this mishap is connected with a tree and a serpent, an interdict on the tree and the disregard thereof by the first man, and all this by

¹ Lenormant, *Contemporary Review*, Sept. 1879 and 1891.

different nations having but few other things in common, the difficulty of explaining their likeness is increased. The figures are, if one may say so, fanciful ; there is no common substratum in human experience to sufficiently account for their contemporaneous appearance in literature and theology. The reason for the resemblance must be sought, not in the subjective working of fancy, but in a primitive objective source, a historic tradition stretching back to a remote past.

Preference is given to the Hebrew account over the Hindoo and Iranian myths, because of its superior theological proportion and literary sobriety. It is free from redundancies and deficiencies ; it has no striking exaggerations or palpable defects. It stands foursquare to human experience. In all heathen mythologies the facts are more or less disfigured ; but, instead of invalidating the Mosaic account, the disfigurements pay tribute to it, and demonstrate the existence of the story before the dispersion of the nations from their original home. It is a part of their common dowry. The prevalence of the legend in countries widely separated, so far from discrediting the Mosaic account, tends directly to prove that it had an objective historic basis. If the Genesis writer does not here record the truth, historical as well as doctrinal, then mankind are ignorant of the circumstances of the direst calamity which befell the race ; and whilst maintaining that much truth has been made known by the combined action of the revelation of God and the inspiration of man, the truth concerning our Fall—the most important to us next to the truth respecting our

Salvation, and around which the minds of men have always wistfully revolved endeavouring to peer into its secrets—has been concealed from our view. If we believe in the revelation of truths of minor importance, I cannot bring myself to believe that this should remain unrevealed. St. Paul evidently believed in the historicity of Genesis, for once and again he bases an argument on the story of the serpent; and I have sufficient respect for St. Paul to assume that he would not found an argument on a legend. A legend may answer a good purpose as an illustration in a discourse, but will not serve as a foundation for the superstructure of an argument.

II. Be the drapery mythical, legendary, or poetic, the central facts remain incontestable, underlying all subsequent history, and refusing to be ignored or explained away.

First, there must have been a first man and first woman. Without a first there cannot be a hundredth. One is the foundation of all numbers. The primeval existence of Adam and Eve is a postulate of the existence of the 1,500,000,000 of mankind to-day. Second, the first man and woman must have lived somewhere. Even on the evolutionary hypothesis, that "somewhere" must have been a locality favourable to their first leap upward to manhood, and to their continuance thereafter in that developed state. A climate of extreme inclemency on the one hand, or of excessive heat on the other, would impede, not promote, their unfolding. The soil must have been genial, the climate temperate. All this coincides exactly with the Mosaic narrative. Third, the first man and woman must have had a beginning, and

therefore of necessity a commencement in moral development, intellectual enlightenment, and manual labour. There must have been a first step in each of these pursuits. What more natural than that man's first occupation should be that of a tiller of the ground to satisfy his physical necessities, that his mental education should start with the study of the use to which he might convert the animals around him, and that his moral development should begin by the subjugation of the bodily appetences to the government of reason? The whole story so far wears the aspect of verisimilitude. Fourth, humanity has lapsed into sin, and, consequently, into misery. Human sin atheistic science may, but human misery it cannot, deny. Theistic philosophy, however, has never controverted either; on the contrary, it has taxed to the utmost its ingenuity to account for the undeniable moral disorder, and the consequent physical suffering of the race. "All have sinned; there is none righteous, no, not one," is the testimony of philosophy no less than of the Bible, of Greek sages no less than of Hebrew prophets, of heathen poets no less than of Christian apostles.

From the universality of sin, philosophy has inferred that the fountain must have somehow become troubled and embittered. The manner it cannot explain, though it has often made the attempt. But of the fact of a Fall, and that near the beginning of history, it entertains no manner of doubt. "If moral evil be a reality, then it must have had a commencement, and that commencement must be sought for in the great head of humanity, the *primus homo* from whom all the race has descended,

The hypothesis that sin may have broken in upon mankind at a stage later than the beginning is not one that has ever been seriously formulated. The solidarity of the race and the law of heredity in morals render it at least the more probable assumption that the spiritual decay under which the race now pines fell upon it in the person of its original progenitor. No system of philosophy that recognises sin to be a reality entertains a suspicion that the first sinner was not the first man. It may offer explanations as to how sin arose that are inconsistent with the Biblical account, saying that sin is of necessity involved in the conception of a finite being, or in the historical transition of humanity from a state of nature to a state of culture ; but it does not call in question that sin did arise, that man did not enter on the stage of time in a state of sin, but in a state of innocence, and that he passed from the one to the other through his own personal volition." ¹

These four facts are incontrovertible, apart altogether from the Mosaic account. They are insisted upon in ethnic poetry, mythology, and philosophy. Deny the inspiration of Genesis, disregard the Mosaic presentation, the facts still remain, constituting the foundation on which is constructed both Hebrew and Christian theology, nay, the basis on which natural religion itself is built. An honest avowal of these four facts will make room in their due time for all the great doctrines of Christianity. Underneath all religions, natural and revealed, mythological and historical, underneath all poetry and philosophy, lie these facts, hard as granite, and

¹ Whitelaw, *Patriarchal Times*, pp. 93, 94.

laying hold on the core of history. Being the first postulates of the historical conscience, they are in a sense independent of Moses and all other writers. What claim then do we advance on behalf of Moses? Not that he first revealed the facts, for these belong to natural as well as supernatural theology; but that he first presented these facts in a credible historical setting. The authenticity of the central facts, so clearly and concisely presented to us, goes a long way to prove that the frame is not altogether the filigree of imagination. Natural facts are described under supernatural light, thus forming a proper basis for the supernatural religion which is to follow.

III. Behind the serpent and inspiring it was the tempter, a wicked invisible spirit. As man derived his inspiration from God, so the serpent derived its inspiration from the devil.

The evil spirit is not here mentioned by name; and yet one cannot seriously read the narrative without suspecting a secret evil power behind. The obvious incompetency of the brute serpent to the achievement of the task of tempting two rational beings necessitates the mind to peer behind the curtain, and seek an adequate cause. Of the serpent it is said that it was more subtil than all the beasts of the field; but its subtilty was not equal to thinking, speaking, arguing—in all this it transcends the limits of brute intelligence. Accordingly every sincere reader feels instinctively that the serpent hides a mystery, that it is not the source, but the channel, of evil.

Moses does not name the tempter: did he know

the devil was the inspirer of the serpent? Probably not; and if he did know, Divine Wisdom did not think it proper to reveal the doctrine of the existence of evil spirits to mankind in the period of their childhood. The doctrine of evil as embodied in a host of malicious spirits was not for the childhood, but for the manhood, of the race. Belief in evil spirits, always lying in ambush for them, would overwhelm mankind with disaster—they would fear the devil more than God; consequently demon-worship would usurp the service of Jehovah. On the Khassia hills, where a successful mission is carried on by our Church, though the natives believe in a good God as well as in evil spirits, the worship is wholly offered to demons. The good God, argue these subtle thinkers of the mountains, need not be conciliated; but the demons must be flattered, cajoled, worshipped, else they will send upon us misfortunes and pestilences. Neither were the Hebrews in the days of Moses, nor for centuries after, sufficiently robust morally to bear the revelation of the doctrine of evil spirits—they would misuse it to the subversion of their high destiny. As it was, they continually lapsed into nature-worship, the adoration of the gods representing the forces of nature; from demon-worship they were graciously preserved, because the doctrine of evil spirits remained unrevealed.

But, though the devil is not specifically mentioned, his presence looms in the blackness of the mystery. A serpent speaking, arguing, theologising! Behind the serpent there must be a dark evil intelligence. The basis of the doctrine of the devil in subsequent

Scriptures is found here; there is a void which needs to be filled. The devil, assuming the shape, or probably using as an instrument, a real material serpent, took advantage of man's probation to graft upon it his temptation. How the devil attained knowledge of the newly created pair, and their whereabouts, is a mystery we cannot fathom; not because of the intrinsic profundity of the problem, but because of our total ignorance of the conditions and capabilities of incorporeal existences. Milton's glowing picture of the devil's hazardous voyage of discovery, from the nether darkness through the empty spaces of the universe, excites within us a sense of admiration for the genius which could draw such a masterly picture; but it contributes nothing to our theological knowledge.

More to the point is the contention of Kurtz, Delitzsch, and others, that the evil spirits, in their pristine holy estate, were the inhabitants of this planet, and that in consequence of their insurrection against the Sovereign Will, the earth became *tohu vabohu*—without form and void. Thus they place the fall of the angels in our earth, and historically between vers. 1 and 2 of chap. i. of Genesis. To those who love the strange and abnormal, the supposition is full of weirdness and fascination. However, I see no Scriptural or other support to it beyond the indisputable fact that evil and good spirits are acquainted with the history of man, are cognisant of the geography of the earth, and live in contiguity to it. What the nature of the connection is we cannot tell; that it exists from the beginning seems indisputable.

To the temptation of Adam and Eve by the evil spirit doubtless the Lord Jesus refers in John viii. 44: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." The crime laid to his charge is that of murder, not simply of manslaughter; and murder always carries with it intention, purpose, deliberateness. This drives home to the devil the direst, blackest crime without any extenuating circumstances. "He abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." The worst men in this life are not totally destitute of conscience; they have in them grains of truth which form a basis for the Gospel to rest its fulcrum upon. But in the devil not a vestige of conscience is left; "in him there is no truth," not an atom.

This fell, cunning foe it was which approached our first parents in Eden to tempt them to their ruin. He was not permitted to appear as an angel of light; persuasion to eat of the forbidden fruit by one bearing such heavenly credentials would almost necessarily compel credence. He draws near in the guise of a serpent, the vilest creature on earth, the only brute which manufactures poison. That the serpent before the Fall differed in shape or organism from the serpent tribe of the present day is a gratuitous assumption of the older theologians—geology proves the contrary. To serpents human nature has an instinctive aversion, which cannot be wholly ascribed to the "enmity" mentioned in the sentence God pronounced on the serpent. A similar aversion exists between humanity and

most reptiles, not altogether as the consequence of the curse, but from a healthy, natural shrinking of human nature. Had sin never entered the world, mankind would have shrunk from snakes, for snake-bites would be poisonous then as they are now. I do not believe the lithe form, the shining skin, the glittering eye of the brute had, as described by some writers, any fascination for the first woman—her feminine nature instinctively recoiled from such a reptile.

What then was it that arrested her attention and commanded her regard? That the reptile should speak! The miracle overwhelmed her sense of the moral. Instead of judging the miracle by the moral, she judged the moral by the miracle—a temptation against which the Lord often warns the Israelites in the subsequent books of the Pentateuch. Later on we read of Balaam's ass which spoke. In the New Testament, the phenomenon of the Gadara swine rushing headlong to the sea, under the frightful ferment wrought in them by the entrance of evil spirits, has arrested attention and provoked discussion. In some mysterious way both good and evil spirits seem to have the power to exert subtle influence on animal nature. According to the Genesis record, the serpent spoke. Eve, who was a help meet for Adam in intellect as well as in other respects, knew that speech was not a quality inherent in the animal world. The miracle created surprise and wonderment, prepared her to subordinate the moral to the physical. Milton represents the case differently—teaching that Eve, in her ignorance, did not suspect that the faculty

of speech was not innate in the serpent. The devil, he says, chose the serpent,

Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight; for in the wily snake,
Whatever sleights, none would suspicion mark,
As from his wit and native subtilty
Proceeding; which, in other beasts observed,
Doubt might beget of diabolical power,
Active within beyond the sense of brute.¹

The *Speaker's Commentary* apparently adopts the poet's fancy: "The reason why Satan took the form of a beast remarkable for its subtilty may have been that so Eve might be the less upon her guard. New as she was to all creation, she may not have been surprised at speech in an animal which apparently possessed almost human sagacity." If she were so new to creation as all that, she could know nothing of serpentine sagacity any more than of serpentine speech. But is this a probable presentation of the case? There is nothing in the serpentine form or face to suggest the power of speech; I would sooner expect it in a dog, an ape, or a horse. The subtilty possibly refers to the sinuousness of form, not to the degree of intelligence. Slyness is not intelligence. It was the unexpected, not the expected, power of speech in a reptile that arrested Eve's attention. This miracle of speech in a dumb beast it was which produced surprise and wonderment, and prepared her to subordinate the moral to the physical.

Men in every age are prone to test the ethical by the miraculous, instead of judging the miraculous

¹ *Paradise Lost*; Book IX.

by the ethical. Here, I believe, is the explanation, so far as such an explanation is possible, of the success of the temptation—only I state it metaphysically, whereas Moses states it historically. Many questions may be here urged, such as, How could the devil speak in Hebrew or whichever language was spoken by Eve? How did he know of the commandment prohibiting the first pair to eat of the forbidden fruit? Was he near at the theophany of God in Eden, and heard the conversation between the Creator and His creature? Or was he prowling about the Garden, and learnt of the interdict by overhearing the conversation of the man and his wife? The difficulties in the way of implicit belief in the historical accuracy of the details are many and serious, and could not be accepted were it not for the greater difficulties of relegating it to the limbo of legend and myth. Say that the story of the serpent is an allegory, and it follows that the judgment on the serpent is an allegory, and the first promise of the Seed of the Woman to bruise the serpent's head vanishes away. We cannot make one part allegory, and the rest history. If the promise is historically true, the whole narrative stands with it. The difficulties of rejecting the story are incomparably greater than those of accepting it, and the consequences incomparably more serious, none less than reducing into myth or legend the protevangel, the fundamental promise of salvation.

But why did God permit the serpent thus to approach Eve at all? The answer that it was the work of the devil does not solve the problem. The

question of the man Friday in *Robinson Crusoe* at once occurs—"Why God not kill the deebil?" Not only the first rise of evil in the angelic nature, but the Divine sufferance of it to be extended to the human race, and its uninterrupted continuance in the world all these millenniums, are problems unfathomable so far by finite intelligences. When the drama of evil shall have been completed, the end may throw light upon the beginning; at all events, the ways of God will be justified to the conscience, though not perhaps comprehended by the intellect.

IV. The temptation took two forms: first, it instilled into the mind narrow, suspicious thoughts of God's goodness; second, it sought to sever the connection in thought between transgression and punishment. These constitute the two fundamental forms of temptation in every age.

First, the tempter insinuates that God was unnecessarily severe, harsh, and arbitrary. The tempter pretends to love man, and to be more solicitous for his well-being than God—he beautifully baits the hook: "Hath God indeed said, Ye shall not eat of *all* the trees of the garden?" The Hebrew may convey the meaning, "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of *every* tree of the garden?" but from the context, and especially the conjunction, it is obvious that the meaning is, "Ye shall not eat of *any* tree." The insinuation is that God prohibited, not one, but every tree, and that therefore His austerity was unreasonable. Eve answers: "No, not every tree, only one; we are forbidden to eat of one under penalty of death." The leaven is not long before it begins a process of fermentation.

“Oh, only one; why did He forbid that one? There must be some reason—that one must be superior to all the others; God is jealous of you, and knows that by eating of it you will be on equal terms with Himself, knowing good and evil.” He thus ascribes jealousy to the Almighty, the attribute uniformly ascribed to the gods in all heathen religions, the attribute which constitutes the fundamental heresy of all mere human thinking concerning God. According to Herodotus, not love, but jealousy, is the ethical essence of all pagan deities. Zeus is especially jealous of men, and puts every obstacle in the way of their progress. “This is the root of bitterness” that has ever after corrupted all religions of man’s devising.

The second point in the temptation is the severance of the connection between transgression and punishment: “Ye shall not surely die”—you may take of the fruit, punishment will not follow. This radical fallacy has persisted in the human mind down to the present hour. You discover it in its popular form in all the criminals of the age, who imagine that they can sin and not be caught, that they can break the law and escape the punishment threatened for its violation. Mentally they break the absolute connection between sin and punishment. This fundamental mistake makes itself palpably felt in some of the current theological systems of the day. The denial of the absolute need, and the substitutive character, of the Atonement, arises from the belief that no necessary, indissoluble connection subsists between sin and its penalty. Behold here the self-contradiction of error. The first thought in

the temptation is the austerity of God, forbidding what He had no need to forbid, making that sin which was no sin. The second thought is the laxity of God, that, notwithstanding His prohibition, He would repent Him of the execution of the threatened penalty. Let it, however, be a fixed principle in all our thinking, that sin and punishment are indissolubly bound together. If we sin, the penalty must inevitably fall, either on us or on our Surety. Punishment cannot be severed from sin, though, through the grace of God, it can be severed from the sinner.

The cunning casuistry of the serpent beclouded the intellect of Eve, and excited within her curious desires. The attractive appearance of the tree helped forward the temptation. Injurious growths generally wear the colours of gaiety and gaudiness, whereas the wholesome vegetables are usually robed in sombre hues. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." St. Paul, however, draws a distinction between Adam and Eve, evidently founded on this passage: "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Tim. ii. 14). The serpent beguiled Eve by its subtilty; her intellect becoming dimmed, she was consequently enticed into evil—a touch of nature which makes all women kin. But Adam was not deceived—he transgressed with the eyes of his understanding wide open, he sinned slowly, deliberately, he threw all the thought-

fulness of his nature into his act, and this it was which constituted the enormity of the Fall. He broke the commandment because he preferred breaking it to keeping it. "Adam was not deceived." Milton fancifully describes Adam taking the fatal step from love to his wife—Eve without Paradise being dearer to him than Paradise without Eve. But the guilt of the Fall cannot be thus mitigated—he loved the creature more than the Creator, the bias of his nature was reversed. The Fall was not the result of a sudden impulse, but of a will consciously, deliberately, knowingly choosing the path of disobedience, preferring sin to God. The probation of God, designed to develop good, by the temptation of the devil was converted into an instrument to evolve evil. The fatal step was taken, the sin was committed, the equilibrium was lost. The Fall is a fact.

V. Accordingly the Mosaic narrative saddles man with the responsibility of sin.

True, the evil spirit is represented as the inaugurator of sin. It was he who sowed the corrupt seed in the human heart, it was he who scattered tares in the field of the Divine Husbandman; but the devil's seduction did not destroy Adam's responsibility. The devil and man were in partnership; but this did not imply limited liability. The two were alike steeped in guilt, though perhaps not to the same extent.

Moses clearly exonerates God from any culpability for the existence of sin, or any responsibility for its introduction into the world. God is set forth as forbidding sin before its entrance, and condemning sin after. This at once marks a great elevation

in the Mosaic conception of the Divine Being. The Greek divinities, it is well known, were essentially immoral; the idea of holy gods, clean in the inward parts, had not dawned upon the Greek mind. Other nations, such as the Parsees, conceived of two gods, one good, the other evil, thus evincing that in their minds the idea of holiness was separable from that of divinity. They did not conceive of goodness, holiness, cleanness as, in logical phrase, essential, not accidental, attributes of a Divine Being. A god might be virtuous or he might be vicious. But Holy Writ from the outset assumes goodness as a necessary attribute of Godhead. The first time He intermingles in human history, He prohibits evil, condemns sin. This initial opposition to evil develops later on into essential holiness, an attribute without which God could not be God. In the New Testament this same truth makes a further advance, and blossoms into essential love. "God is Love." This continuity in the Biblical lines of thought, broadening and deepening but never breaking, as they stretch forward, cannot but deeply impress every thoughtful reader, differentiating as it does the Hebrew and Christian revelation from all the other so-called "Sacred Books" of the East. Whereas these latter lower the tone of morality as they proceed, the beginning being loftier and purer than the end, the Bible grows in spirituality of conception and purity of sentiment from age to age, ennobling and enlarging its idea of the Divine character, uplifting the standard of human morality—the end, whilst growing out of, yet transcending, the beginning.

The Mosaic teaching, in respect of the Divine

attitude towards sin, excels not only that of contemporary religions, but calmly avoids the rocks on which much modern theology makes shipwreck. Rothe, for instance, constrained by the necessities of his system, drives the responsibility for the existence of sin back on God: "The effort to separate evil from all connection with the Divine causality must ever remain an idle undertaking."¹ Once and again he recoils from this position, as was inevitable in a man of his fine moral sensibilities; but a theological giant though he was, he was bound in the meshes of his own argument. Other writers, less able and less reverent, have along other routes reached the same staggering conclusion. The discussion of these theories belongs to the province of dogmatic theology, and I only mention them here to point out that Moses, in the early dawn of revelation, steered clear of the immoral conceptions of the ancients, and of the metaphysical speculations, equally immoral, of moderns. Though the first to state the profound problem of evil, he betrays no excitement, no improper eagerness to arrive at a solution; but, whatever the solution be, God must be viewed as the antagonist, not the creator, of moral evil.

The Divine character, according to Moses, is untarnished. God prohibits sin before, condemns it after, its commission. A healthy moral instinct, illumined doubtless from above, postulates for God complete immunity from sin. This truth stands out in the forefront of his writings, and by it all subsequent revelations must be judged. What better test of doctrine can any one desire? Reading the

¹ *Ethik*, ii., p. 180.

brilliant productions of modern theologians of restless genius, we are in danger of becoming bewildered, and plucking the forbidden fruit. Let us, however, adopt it as our guiding principle that whatever theory traces sin up to God, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively, that theory stands condemned. Gabriel, as portrayed by Milton, guarding Eden, and searching therein for the evil spirit, of whose arrival he had been apprised, with his wand touched a toad crouching at the ear of the recumbent Eve, and at the touch up sprang a devil. Young theologians need that wand, for error comes to them, not in the guise of a toad, repulsive to refined sensibilities, but, more dangerous, arrayed in all the splendours of an angel of light, attractive and imposing. But here is a wand for their use—God is eternally, uncompromisingly inimical to evil. Touch with it the theories launched upon the sea of speculation in the name of philosophy ; if they cast a shadow, even that of a passing cloud, upon the Divine character, they must stand self-convicted. “Let God be true, and every man a liar.”

Seeing that the cause of sin is not in the Creator, we are shut in to the conclusion that its origin must be in the creature.

Leibnitz, in his celebrated *Théodicée*, accounted for the rise of evil by reason of the finiteness of the creature. Doubtless there is a sense wherein this is true. Given the idea of God, infinite in goodness, and the possibility of sin is inconceivable. But whilst this is true of infinite or absolute, it is not true of finite or relative, goodness. Relative goodness carries with it the possibility of evil—the

possibility, not the necessity. Herein many brilliant writers have made a shipwreck of the faith, making sin a necessity instead of a possibility of the finite. Others again, Hegel for instance, make sin an inevitable accompaniment of development, thus converting the Fall into a rise, and sin into an indispensable link in the chain of progress. Hegelianism, however, takes for granted what it first of all ought to prove—that there was but one way for a movement forward of humanity, the one through sin and suffering. Moses, with a deeper, truer insight, I believe, shows that there were two roads to a forward movement—one upward along the path of obedience, the other downward along the path of self-will. Upon the choice man made depended whether his movement forward should be a movement upward or a movement downward. Adam is represented standing at the cross-roads, God exhorting him to climb the upward path, the serpent beguiling him to take the downward. As the downward appeared the easier, the downward he took.

In the Mosaic teaching, therefore, sin is traced up to the free will of man, the power of self-determination with which he was endowed at his creation. Allowing all legitimate influence to external temptations and motives, yet the ultimate motor power of the will lies within the will itself. Man has a supreme power of self-determination; in the power of free will he touches the infinite, and is “as God, knowing good and evil.” He here reaches out to the unconditioned and absolute. To inquire, therefore, for the cause of sin behind self-will is parallel to seeking the cause of the universe in Nihilism, or

the cause of God outside His own essence. "Who asks the efficient cause of an evil will?" asks Augustine. "There is no efficient in the case, only a deficient. Whoso would ask to see darkness, or to hear silence, let him ask reason of the unreasonable, that is, of sin."¹ Man was free to choose good and pursue it; he was also at liberty to elect evil and follow it. By deciding in favour of good, he would be acting in deepest harmony with the natural laws of the physical world, with his own original constitution, yea, in unison with all the moral laws of the Divine government. By deciding for virtue, he would be observing all the laws of rationality, human and Divine, and giving his nature unrestricted play to evolve all its latent capabilities amid the most advantageous surroundings.

But for some inexplicable reason he departed from the path of righteousness to pursue false ideals. "God created man upright, but they found out many inventions." Inexplicable reason, I said; I might go further, and say that Adam's choice, and consequently his Fall, is not only inexplicable, but unreasonable—that is, without reason, contrary to reason. It runs counter to all the laws of reason, human and Divine. No wonder, therefore, that the origin of evil is a mystery, a "mystery of lawlessness." "Sin is the transgression of law," of all law, moral and mental; a mystery consequently it will ever remain, not because of its profundity like the Divine Being, but because of its contradiction to all principles, human and Divine. This makes the origin of it incomprehensible, and a philosophy of

¹ *De Civitate Dei*, cap. vi.

it impossible. The philosophy of the Rise of Man, or of the Way of Salvation, is practicable, for it takes place in accordance with law; but the philosophy of the Fall of Man is beyond the pale of reason—the Fall was not the observance but the violation of all law. Freedom of will was perverted into arbitrariness of choice, and arbitrariness or caprice excludes the possibility of rational explanation. Hence the Bible never degrades the word “freedom” by applying it to the capriciousness of the sinner. Freedom (ἐλευθερία) is sacredly preserved by all Biblical writers to designate the free growth of men in good, in virtue, in holiness, in congruity with all that is deep and innate in human nature. The word they invariably apply to the sinner in his pursuit of evil is not liberty, but bondage. This uniform practice by so many different writers seems to point up to a superintending Mind. From not properly observing the Scriptural usage, and consequent limitation of meaning, in these two terms, many of the angry controversies of the past have arisen. Freedom in its metaphysical sense is equally applicable to saint and sinner; in its theological, Scriptural sense to the saint alone. Hence Erasmus entitled his book *De Libero Arbitrio*, whilst Luther called his *De Servo Arbitrio*; but manifestly they were employing words in different significations. Philosophically Erasmus was right, that freedom in the sense of liberty of choice belongs to all men indiscriminately. Theologically Luther was right, that freedom in the good sense, the Scriptural sense, is predicable only of the good, sinners being in “bondage to sin.”

CHAPTER X

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL

THE Creator not being responsible for the rise of sin, the idea of it did not enter as an integral part into His plan of the world. Nevertheless God foresaw its introduction, and made due provision for its ultimate extirpation. When the constructors in her Majesty's navy sketch a man-of-war, the idea of shipwreck finds no place in the plan; the ruling thought is not how to make it sink, but how to make it swim. The thought of life, not of death, dominates all. Yet present to the mind of the naval architects is the possibility of accidents; consequently they provide watertight compartments and order lifeboats and swimming-belts. The idea of shipwreck, however, is not an integral part of the plan of the ship. It is an accidental, not an essential, attribute of the man-of-war. In like manner the idea of sin does not enter into the Divine world-plan; but, foreseeing the disaster, God made due preparations to rescue those plunged in the furious waves. Chronologically salvation was not an after-thought of the Divine Mind, logically it was.

I. For the impending transgression of Adam, the Supreme Being threatened death: "In the day thou

eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The question naturally arises, Did Adam die? Was the verbal menace followed by its actual execution? The answer must be that man died forensically—that is, in the eye of Divine Justice he forfeited all claims to life. He stood condemned in the sight of his Maker.

But was not the offence—"the eating of an apple"—too trivial to be visited with capital punishment? Are there no degrees in punishment as there are in sin? No doubt; but the smallest punishment possible for sin, in the nature of things, is death. Guilt, however small, calls upon it the displeasure of the Almighty; the Divine disfavour implies the withdrawal of the Divine fellowship; and the withdrawal of the Divine fellowship involves spiritual death. A tendency is manifest in the present day, indeed the tendency has been formulated into a theological system in the Ritschlian school, to view guilt as wholly subjective. The Bible, however, from start to finish, it appears to me, contemplates sin as an objective reality, something truly terrible between man and God, intercepting all agreeable intercommunion, something which cannot be removed by a wave of the hand or annihilated by a wish, whether human or Divine. A leading principle, underlying all Biblical theology, is that guilt is a grim, terrible, objective reality, and that the smallest degree of guilt involves judicial death.

This is not to be interpreted as signifying that there are no degrees in Divine punishment; the principle of proportion runs through all Scripture: "They that sinned without law shall also be judged

without law." "He that knew the will of his Lord, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." What I wish to say is, that the first stripe is death. Taking man in his relation to God, a smaller punishment than death cannot be imagined, though in death depths underlie depths. Adam sinned, and sinning, died. Consider the traitor at the bar of justice. The moment the verdict of guilty is returned, and the sentence of death is pronounced, the criminal is in the eye of the law dead. He forfeits all rights—all rights to property, to liberty, yea, to existence itself. If he be permitted to breathe another week, he owes it to the clemency of the Crown. Thus Adam forfeited all rights to Eden, to the Divine favour, to life itself; and if he is permitted to live on, it is wholly through the prerogative of the Divine Mercy.

Following the disorganisation of his objective relations to God came the subjective disorder in his inner nature. To forensic followed moral death. "Followed," I say deliberately; for it is true, I think, to the deepest teaching of Holy Writ that objective guilt is the cause of moral corruption. As Justification is the objective cause of Sanctification, that is to say, it furnishes a sufficient reason for the purifying of the nature, so the condemnation of guilt is the objective cause of inward depravity.

In propounding this statement I differ, I know, from the Westminster Catechism as well as from eminent divines, not only of the Arminian, but also of the Calvinistic school. Take Dr. Strong, for instance, whose excellent Body of Divinity is so highly spoken of and deservedly recommended to young

theologians. He assumes that Adam must have sinned inwardly before he transgressed outwardly, that he had become internally depraved before he had become externally guilty—guilt is founded on inward pollution. Analogically he holds that Regeneration precedes Justification, that the renewing work of the Spirit within must logically, not chronologically, go before the justifying act of the Father without, that as faith is the fruit of the new nature, and an essential condition precedent to forgiveness, then the new nature in its embryonic state must already exist. This is also the view of Dr. A. A. Hodge in his *Outlines*, though not of the elder Hodge. I have been brought up in another way of thinking, and the more I reflect on it the more fully persuaded I am of its validity. A leading principle in all the theological teaching of the late Dr. Lewis Edwards of Bala—a man who, for strength of intellect and profoundness of insight, bore favourable comparison with his better known English and Scottish contemporaries—was, that the objective is the primary reason for the subjective. In the domain of theology this principle may be applied to the doctrine of the Fall and the doctrine of Justification.

Let us take the latter first, as it will reflect light on the former. Because a man is justified he is sanctified; because he is first made righteous he is afterwards made holy. The readjustment of the objective relation of man to God makes it possible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in the heart to cleanse it from all dead works. But is not faith an evidence of a new nature? Yes, of a new nature following, not preceding. Justifying faith is not the fruit of a

renewed nature ; truer is it to say that the renewed nature is the fruit of justifying faith. A man, whilst yet in a state of ungodliness, may attain to faith, an unregenerate man can believe, therefore God by faith justifies the ungodly. That, it seems to me, is the only view which properly correlates all the doctrines of Christianity, and which imparts sincerity to our appeals to unbelievers to return, believe, and live. Divine co-operation is not thereby excluded, for the Spirit works *on* men before He works *in* them ; but it does shut out the theory which makes the subjective the reason for the objective, thereby reversing, as it seems to me, the whole Pauline process.

The same principle holds good in our theory respecting the Fall : the objective should be viewed as the basis of the subjective. Adam's guilt was the ground of his subsequent defilement—his guilt did not arise in consequence of his inward impurity, but his inward impurity arose in consequence of his guilt. But how could he have incurred guilt if he had not sinned, and how could he have sinned unless he were moved thereto by unholy lusts? The first half of the question suggests what is true, the second half what is false. Adam could not incur guilt without sin ; but he could without sinfulness. Sin preceded sinfulness, the act went before and determined the state. As Dorner well says, "The thought of evil is not an evil thought." The first sin of Adam consisted in an outward act, not in inward state or desire. To desire of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was no sin ; it was the natural instinctive working of the bodily

appetences. Had he resisted the desire, he would have passed through his ordeal unscathed ; his innocence, so far from being soiled, would have grown whiter, his virtue stronger. The sin was not in the desiring, but in the eating ; not in the inward state, but in the outward act. Had he not eaten he would not have fallen. But does not the Saviour teach that lust is adultery ? Precisely, for adultery is an evil in itself, a flagrant breach of the moral law. But eating of the fruit was not an evil in itself, it was no violation of a moral but of a positive commandment ; consequently the longing for it was no sin. The act it was which constituted the sin. Therefore, sin is the cause of sinfulness, the outward act is the explanation of the inward state, the objective guilt the reason for the subjective depravity.

In accordance with this is the maxim which has been adopted by the majority of theologians since the Middle Ages : " In Adam a person made nature sinful ; in his posterity nature made persons sinful." Or, as paraphrased by Laidlaw : " In the first man's sin, the individual ruled the nature ; ever since the nature rules the individual."¹ Man first fell to a condition of guilt, and thereby contracted sinfulness of nature. However much Adam desired the fruit, so long as he resisted he stood in his integrity ; had he finally withstood, his triumph would have secured a happy termination to his probation. Had there been nothing in the fruit to excite desire, his probation would have been only a sham ; but because " the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one

¹ *Doctrine of Man*, p. 219.

wise," because it was pre-eminently calculated to excite desire, it was ordained as a trial-test. Sinless man can sin—that is the mystery of the Fall. An ungodly man can believe—that is the mystery of the Rise. As guilt is forensic or legal death, so defilement is moral or spiritual death, the connection between the heart and the Fountain of Life having been wholly severed.

Immediately the breath leaves the body, man is as dead as he will be twelve months hence—not as putrid, but as dead. The decomposition will increase, the death not. Or take another illustration. The moment the tree is severed from its roots it is dead, out-and-out dead. The foliage may not wither straight off; yea, new leaves may sprout out the following spring, fed by the sap hiding under the bark—a phenomenon often witnessed; but all the time the tree is wholly dead. The putrefaction is not complete, the death is. Thus with Adam. The hour he sinned he was cut off from communion with his Maker, the Water of Life no longer gushed up in the depths of his spirit, pure and clean. Not the connection was damaged, but wholly severed: the death was complete. His leaves may not straightway drop off, though at once they show a limpidity and serenity not seen before; his intellectual life may sprout out in the arts and sciences; but all the same he is forensically and spiritually dead. The corruption may increase, the death not. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

This double death of the sinner the old preachers of Wales illustrated by an apt simile—a man convicted of murder and sentenced to pay the extreme

penalty of the law. The man is lying under sentence of death. But before the day of execution arrives, he catches the jail-fever, and is sick unto death in his cell. The man is doubly dead, dead by law and dead by fever. Thus the sinner is lying under the condemnation of the law. And not only he lies under a verdict of death, but the jail-fever holds him in its terrible grip, every year tightening its grasp. Man is both guilty and polluted, condemned and sick, dead by law and dead by fever.

Sin, however, not only entailed upon mankind legal and spiritual, but is the only adequate explanation of physical, death: "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin" (Rom. v. 12). Many good men go away from these words with the notion that St. Paul, and consequently Moses, taught that till the entrance of sin death was unknown in the creation. A little reflection, however, suffices to show that the subject discussed is not death of animals, but death of men—"and so death passed upon all *men*," not all animals, "inasmuch as all sinned." Augustine and other patristic writers perceived as clearly as we do that death reigned from the beginning in the irrational creation. Many of the animals named in the first chapter of Genesis are by nature carnivorous, created to live by devouring others. The teaching of Moses, as interpreted by St. Paul, is that the separation of body and spirit in man is the consequence of transgression: "Death is the wages of sin."

In an earlier chapter the opinion was expressed that the human body was created mortal, in consonance with the universal reign of the law of mortality in all materially organised creatures; but

that, had man maintained his normal rectitude, mortality would have been swallowed up of life. The body mortal would have never deteriorated into a body dead ; the material and spiritual elements in the human organism would have never been sundered. The law of mortality in the body would have been counteracted by the stronger law of the spiritual life. Had man continued in his integrity, the body as well as the spirit would have attained immortality. The New Testament speaks of the sudden change which will take place in the bodies of those who believe at the Lord's Second Coming ; the mortal by some mysterious metamorphosis will put on immortality.

Similarly had the Fall not taken place, the grey fathers of the race would have escaped the natural law of decay, the body would have been clothed upon with a vesture of immortality, or, more probably, access would have been uninterrupted to the Tree of Life, whose ambrosial fruit would renew the vigour of the body and confer upon it the power of endless life. Through sin, however, men were excluded from participation in its fruit ; and that exclusion is itself a direct execution of the sentence, "Thou shalt surely die." In consequence of sin, man was left to the unfailing operation of the physical law of decay ; thus "by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin." By nature man is mortal ; only by sin does he become dead. Augustine, with his usual insight, explaining Rom. viii. 10, 11, writes : " 'If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.' Paul is most careful to say 'dead,' not 'mortal.' The body was mortal by its nature, yet that mortal did not become dead but on account

of sin. . . . And again, 'He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies.' Paul says not 'your dead bodies,' as before he had said 'the body is dead,' but 'shall quicken,' says he, 'even your mortal bodies,' and that in such a way that not only shall they not be dead, but also no longer mortal." "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," gives expression to a universal law of nature. Had Adam persevered in his obedience, the dust would have been spiritualised and immortalised; but because of his transgression this law of nature proved stronger than he, it asserted its supremacy by the dissolution of the physical organism.

II. The Fall of Adam, however, concerned not himself alone, but furthermore his posterity.

Moses presents this truth in the form of history. Adam is alleged to have begotten a son in his own image, not in the image of God; and the history of his descendants leaves the impression on the mind that they are all gone astray. "All flesh corrupted its way on the earth." Meditating on these facts, St. Paul deduced from them the famous doctrine of "original sin." It is beside my purpose, and belonging more properly to the province of dogmatic theology, to discuss this doctrine at length, though perhaps no doctrine more imperatively demands a restatement in the present day. Yet it were expedient to examine one or two points in the Mosaic narrative in the light of its interpretation by St. Paul. People object to bring the Apostle to expound Moses. But why? They do not object to long citations from German rationalists, but if Paul is

quoted they at once sound the bugle of rebellion. But Paul, in my humble estimation, throws more light on Moses than any other writer, ancient or modern; no one has a firmer hold of the spiritual kernel of the Mosaic theology.

In the first place, Paul fixes the responsibility of the introduction of sin on "one man," Adam. This is the way wherein he accounts for the universal prevalence of evil. As sin is universal, the first offence must have been committed by the first man, when all humanity was gathered together in one personality. In the second place, St. Paul traces the stream of human evil to its fountain head in the "*one* offence" of the "*one* man." The "one offence," of course, was the partaking of the forbidden fruit. The subsequent offences of Adam are not referred to at all, either by Moses in the narrative or by St. Paul in his commentary thereon. Evidently, then, the other offences were private, concerning no one but the individual Adam—they do not concern us at all, nor had they any influence in determining the course of history. But the "one offence" concerns us as much as him; it brought sin upon us, and death, and all our woe. It is the one hinge on which the destiny of the race hung. Without contradiction that "one offence" of that "one man" bears a closer relation to posterity than the other sins of Adam. What was that relation?

The usual modern answer is, that Adam's relation to us was that of solidarity, a term invented by the erratic but profound genius of the founder of the Positive Philosophy. This truth the older theologians expressed by saying that Adam was the natural head

of the race, or, in other words, the one common "root of bitterness" from which all mankind sprang. Theological thought has been long accustomed to view humanity as a tree, and of necessity the worm-wood in the root imparts its bitter taste to the sap in all the branches. The corruption of our first parents infects their whole progeny. Modern science has, no doubt, brought into greater prominence the organic unity of the race; but it has by no means created the idea, for this pervades the whole of Sacred Writ. Recent speculations, however, have taught the nineteenth century to throw more emphasis upon it. The solidarity of the race is now a truth of philosophy as well as of theology. Mankind are viewed as one immense living organism; the whole is responsible for the welfare of each part, and no damage can be inflicted on the part but it forthwith enfeebles the whole. But the first man sustained a more vital relation to the organism than any subsequent individual, for he was the primary cell, from whose loins all others came, and defilement in him meant depravity in them. A bitter fountain emits an unwholesome stream. If you plant diseased seed in the ground, you cannot expect to gather a strong, healthy crop.

All this is true of Adam in the totality of his life. It is the uniform working of natural law, and as applicable to his second, third, and fourth sin as to the first, though one cannot but think that in its application to common life by extremists, wedded to a favourite theory, its influence is somewhat exaggerated. The theory of heredity occupies a large place in much of the theology and the

philosophy of the century. The river of innate turpitude is described as increasing in volume and momentum from generation to generation, till the impression is unmistakably left on the mind that "original" or hereditary sin, instead of gradually disappearing, is growing darker, more turbid, and more invincible with the roll of the millenniums. But is this teaching true? Is original sin one tinge darker in the babe born to-day, the child of three generations of thieves and drunkards, than it was in the first babe which graced our planet? Have we not heard from our own pulpits sermons preached with intense passion and overpowering influence on the gradual increase of sin in the race—the drunkenness of the grandparent intensifying itself in the father, this again descending with added momentum to the child, till drunkenness appears unavoidable, a physical necessity, in this particular family? But is not all this an exaggeration of the truth? That the principle of heredity is a power within certain limits is undeniable; modification of the fibres and tissues of the body is possible; acquired habits become transmitted instincts, with always a strong tendency, however, to revert to the original type. But man, besides being a physical, is also a spiritual being; and if Traducianism, to the exclusion of Creationism, were the whole truth, this theory might suffice to account for the deplorable phenomena of human life. "But the individual is not a mere manifestation of the race. God applies to the origination of every single man a special creative thought and act of will." The theory of heredity, true within certain limits, is not adequate to

explain all the improvement or deterioration in families.

Even in the animal world its inadequacy is felt. The most perfect specimen of the horse witnessed in this country was a cob-mare, the property of an acquaintance of my own. She was pronounced by the *Times* newspaper the most perfect specimen of horseflesh in the kingdom. In the days of her youth she carried away all prizes in the most important agricultural shows. Her advent was advertised on big placards on the walls of the towns she visited as the greatest attraction of the show. Yet she was a mare without a pedigree, a chance colt cast on the mountains of Pembrokeshire. Neither is the principle of heredity sufficient to account for the appearance of men of genius. Genius does not beget genius. Men of genius come from the most unexpected quarters, and vanish as suddenly as they appear. Genius is a spark dropped into the human mind from outside the planet. It kindles, it flames, it dies. Take Shakespeare, the greatest poet of England. Were his parents more richly endowed intellectually than their neighbours? Did his children inherit his gifts? Or take Williams of Pantycelyn, the great Welsh hymnologist. It is not known that his father and mother inherited a larger share of the Divine afflatus than the other farmers of Carmarthenshire; and it is a well-established fact that none of his descendants inherited the celestial flame. In every individual a spiritual element enters, powerfully modifying the operation of the hereditary principle. Drunkenness in Wales is not hereditary. Out of drunken families

have come many of our most respected citizens, and out of godly families some of the most infamous prodigals.

The transmission of evil, simply according to a law of nature, does not suffice to account for the Scriptural doctrine of original sin. If the law of nature, Like begets like, were the only factor in the problem, Eve should have at least equal prominence with Adam. Eve was first in the transgression; her nature contracted evil probably before her husband's, and yet in the Scriptural presentation of the doctrine Eve has no status. Not by one woman, but by one man, sin entered the world, and death by sin. Eve was a conjoint root of the race; the pollution of her nature passed into her offspring quite as much as that of her husband's; yet the responsibility of the moral abnormality is fixed not on Eve, but on Adam—a strong evidence that he sustained a relation to posterity different from that sustained by Eve. What was this difference? In so far as the principle of heredity or natural headship is concerned, both are on a par.

It would, therefore, appear that a fuller and more adequate answer than that of natural headship must be sought. Paul lays the stress of the argument, not on the first man's corrupt nature, but on his "one offence." That one it was which affected the future destiny of his race; the objective is here again the ground of the subjective. Why, then, that "one offence" more than his other transgressions? Here the so-called federal theology steps in and answers—Because Adam was the

natural head, God constituted him also the Covenant representative of the race; by that "one offence" he broke the covenant, and once broken it no longer existed. Hence the importance attached to the "one offence"; it was not merely a private but a public sin—the one sin which was public, and therefore the one sin by which the future destiny of mankind was settled. That the word "covenant" is not used in this connection forms no objection, though many incline to the opinion that to it Hosea refers, vi. 7: "They like Adam have transgressed the covenant." The term "solidarity" is not yet a hundred years old, and yet figures largely in the writings of those who demur to the term "covenant," which to say the least goes back some centuries. The question, however, is, Was the relation subsisting between the first man and God of the nature of a covenant, or was it an individual transaction wholly based on natural justice?

Let us examine the relation. The commandment interdicting the Tree of Knowledge to man was, we hold, more than a commandment; it was a commandment in the form of a covenant. Dr. Buchanan writes: "In the words of Bishop Hopkins, 'If God had only said, Do this, without adding, Thou shalt live, this had not been a covenant, but a law; and if He had only said, Thou shalt live, without saying, Do this, it had not been a covenant, but a promise. Remove the condition, and you make it a simple promise; remove the promise, and you make it an absolute law: but, both these being found in it, it is both a law and a covenant.'" Personally I attach no importance to

this mechanical reasoning of good Bishop Hopkins, and I have introduced it as leading to a more satisfactory statement by Dr. Buchanan himself: "In this form the law continued to be binding on man by its precept, but God condescended also to bind Himself by His promise, and became, in the expressive words of Boston, 'debtor to His own faithfulness' to make that promise good. A new element was thus introduced into man's relation to God: he was still a creature dependent on the power, and subject to the law, of his Creator; but he was now advanced to be a 'confederate' with Him, and, as long as he continued to obey, could look to Him as his covenant God.

"But there is a wider difference still between the Moral Law, considered simply as the law of man's nature, and the law in its positive form, as a Divine covenant of life. The law, as it was originally inscribed on the moral nature of man, was a PERSONAL rule of duty,—it laid an obligation on each individual singly,—and held him responsible only for himself; but the law, as it was subsequently promulgated in the form of a Divine covenant, was a GENERIC constitution, imposed by supreme authority on the first father of the human race, as the representative of his posterity,—and extending far beyond his individual interests, so as to affect the character and condition even of his remotest descendant. He was constituted, by Divine appointment, the trustee for the whole race which should spring from him; and was placed in the deeply responsible position of their covenant head and legal representative. He was a party to the covenant, not simply as a private

individual, acting for himself alone, but a public person, invested with an official character, and acting also for others. He could not have assumed this office, or acted in this capacity, of his own will; he must have been constituted the legal representative of his posterity by the same Supreme Will which enacted the law under which he was placed.”¹

The form in which Dr. Buchanan presents the subject may appear slightly old-fashioned, but that does not detract from its substantial truth. Had Adam loyally observed the commandment, life eternal would have been the reward of himself and his descendants alike; but as he disobeyed, he incurred the penalty of death for himself and his posterity. “Death is the wages of sin”—the *wages*. Between the transgression and the penalty there is a relation of strict justice. The punishment is an equivalent of the trespass. Immortal life, however, is not the wages of obedience, but rather its reward. The richness of the life to come would be unspeakably greater than the wages of obedience; between them there could be established no relation of equation. The reward would infinitely transcend wages, would be infinitely richer, grander than the just deserts of obedience. Adam, therefore, did not stand on the basis of mere natural right; he was placed by God in an arrangement, or constitution, or compact, or covenant—call it what you will—different from, and transcendent to, the mere constitution of nature.

It is objected that mankind were not a consenting

¹ *The Cunningham Lecture on Justification*, pp. 272, 273.

party. But was our previous consent necessary? Man's consent was not obtained prior to his creation; yet his creation took place. No one objects, for the act of creation was to the advantage of man; to be was better than not to be. Correspondingly our consent was not necessary to the establishment of a Divine covenant with the race. Were the covenant in any way to our disadvantage, our preceding acquiescence might have been deemed needful, which means that no covenant at all could be established between God and His rational subjects. But seeing that the covenant was in every detail arranged, not to our loss, but to our immense gain, securing us benefits to which, on the mere basis of nature, we had no title, our concurrence was rightly deemed superfluous. The covenant did not imperil, but improved, our position. If Adam fell, he and we would have been treated on the principles of strict equity; not one stripe would have been added to our punishment beyond the requirements of strict justice. In regard of punishment men would be as if no covenant existed, treated exactly on the ground of natural justice. On the other hand, had Adam maintained his uprightness, the blessings conferred would have been on a scale infinitely larger than the simple merit of his obedience. When, therefore, it is maintained that Adam was the covenant head of his race, we teach that God placed the human race in a better position than if left simply to the constitution of nature. The covenant was not to our prejudice, but to our interest, and therefore worthy of the Divine Benevolence, which always overflows the boundaries of bare justice. And as by a

covenant we went down, so also, says St. Paul, by a covenant we come up.

III. Having essayed to establish that Adam was our head, not simply according to the arrangement of natural law, but also according to the higher constitution of a covenant law, let us advert to the consequences which necessarily overtook the race in consequence of the treason of their representative. These consequences are generally summed up under the one general term "original sin." Disregard, if you like, the Mosaic and the Pauline explanation of its origin, you cannot deny the reality of its existence.

All sin, be it original or acquired, is composed of two elements: first, guilt or forensic death; second, depravity or moral death.

Original sin implies original guilt. Men before they reach the age of responsibility are labouring under the burden of guilt. We are born in sin, and therefore in guilt, for there is no sin without guilt as its first necessary constituent. The idea of sin without guilt contains a contradiction. But manifestly it is not personal guilt. This opens up to us the terrible vista of generic or race guilt. Adam drew on himself personal guilt, for his conscience charged him directly with a gross dereliction of duty; but what was to him personal sin became to his posterity generic sin. Think not this an idle abstraction. We belong to our race even more than to ourselves; and the better and greater we grow, the more real will this generic sin appear to us. Those who are irretrievably sunk in selfish individualism may object to the imputation to us of the

guilt of the Fall ; but those of expanded sympathies and noble aspirations do not complain, they only lament ; and their noblest effusions, forgetting self-interest, contain expressions of generic contrition for the generic sin.

The doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to us is not a doctrine of revelation merely, the concoction of narrow minds ill trained in political economy, but lies foursquare on the economy of nature. Deny the Bible, what better will you be ? You cannot deny nature. Men, unlike the angels, were not all created independently and simultaneously ; we were created one organism, proceeding the one from the other by natural generation ; and here the fact of natural generation forms the basis to the doctrine of imputation, which does not mean a theological fabrication of logical cobwebs, but the honest recognition of the deepest natural verity. The noblest spirits of the race are the first to acknowledge, and the loudest to proclaim, that we lie under a doom outside the circle of our individual life. The "one offence" of Adam cast its shadow upon all subsequent history, made sick the whole body of humanity.

Yet it is expedient to add that there is no reason to suppose that a single soul has ever perished on account of Adam's transgression. The first offence entailed the condemnation of all, the damnation of none. Eternal punishment will only overtake those who of their own free will prefer darkness to light, take the side of Adam against God, and thereby voluntarily give in their concurrence to the stipulations of the covenant. In the Divine Way of

Salvation ample provision has been made for the recovery of believers, and of children who die under the age of responsibility. Only those who sin wilfully will be consigned to perdition.

By "total depravity" is not signified that man's nature has become out-and-out wicked, that his ungodliness is such that it cannot be aggravated, that his inward pollution has reached the farthest verge of possibility. In logical phrase it denotes, not the "intension," but the "extension," of sin, that every faculty of the mind is tainted, every power corrupted—not to the greatest extent possible, but to such an extent that the whole bias of the mind is away from God and towards evil. Whereas prior to the Fall the inclination of human nature was steadily towards God, thereafter that inclination became reversed, and pointed directly away from God and towards evil. No faculty has escaped the taint, hence the term "total depravity"; but no faculty has fallen into a state of unmitigated, irremediable corruption. Though the soul is at enmity with God, yet it is capable of much that is noble in social and artistic life, and even of responding to Divine appeals as the echo answers the voice. Though no direct communication takes place between God and the sinner, the power for communication, though injured, has not been lost—the power of echo, the answering voice, still remains. Man is a sinner, but not yet a demon.

Every man, therefore, starts life with a burden of inborn sin; he runs the race set before him "weak in the ankle-joints from his mother's womb." His innate bias is away from God and goodness; and

though to please his own pride he may raise objections, yet really in the bottom of his heart he does not object, but rather delights in the evil propensity of his nature, and by his delight gives his approval to the whole scheme or constitution, in virtue of which he became what he is.

But lest any one's ultimate salvation be jeopardised by the innate depravity of the soul, God in His infinite grace has provided counteracting influences in His revealed Word and the "strivings" of the Holy Spirit. Whatever be the innate power of original sin driving us to red ruin and disaster, it is fairly and squarely encountered by the resisting power of the Word and the Spirit. If the former prove victorious, it will be because it has been strongly recruited by the power of the sinner's own free will. Thus God in His infinite consideration has provided for original sin a sufficient counterpoise in the illumination of His Word and the strivings of His Spirit.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROTEVANGEL : DAWN OF HOPE

SOON after their transgression God drew near to the guilty pair : "They heard the Voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." The question here distinctly arises, Were our first parents favoured with theophanies before the Fall? Two answers have been returned. Delitzsch replies, No : "God now for the first time holds converse with men in an outward manner, corresponding to their materialisation and alienated state." Keil, on the contrary, answers, Yes : "God held conversation with the first pair in a visible form, as a father and educator of His children, and this was the original mode of the Divine revelation, not coming in for the first time after the Fall."

This latter view best commends itself to my judgment, not only on the general principle that we have no right to believe that God would do more, and reveal Himself more intimately, to His rebellious than to His obedient children, but also on the ground that men, in their state of virtual infancy, required direct enlightenment and visible assistance. With mankind in their adult, mature state communion of spirit with spirit may suffice ; but in their infantile

inexperience and ignorance, more reasonable and appropriate was it that God should appear to them face to face, and give them through the medium of the physical senses the necessary instruction. At all events, though not directly authenticated, the belief that God should at stated intervals appear to the sinless progenitors of the race in the guise, though not in the reality, of man, to hold communion with them, thereby helping them on in knowledge and virtue, is not inconsistent with the Genesis narrative, but is rather presupposed.

At the usual time of the appearing of the Divine Visitant, "in the cool," or according to the marginal reading, "in the wind of the day," when by a well-known natural law the breezes, towards sundown gently blow, carrying refreshment and renovation to the languid body consequent on the heat and labour of the day, "they heard the Voice of the Lord God walking in the garden." Farther on we read of the Word of the Lord approaching men, by which is generally understood the Second Person in the Godhead drawing near in the way of benediction and grace. Here, however, it is not the Word, but the Voice. In other Scriptures the Voice of God frequently indicates a thunderstorm. Take, for instance, the twenty-ninth Psalm: "The Voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth. The Voice of the Lord is powerful; the Voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The Voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness [*i.e.* the roll of the thunder overhead makes the ground throb underneath]. The Voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve"—that is, the flash of the lightning and the crash of the

thunder affright the hinds, which in their sudden alarm cast their young before the time. That is a possible meaning in this passage also. That day rose cloudless and serene in Eden. In the process of the day Adam and Eve sinned; in the evening, towards sundown, the black clouds gathered, the artillery of heaven boomed—the thunders roared, the lightnings flashed. Our first parents had never heard thunders before nor seen lightnings; and, conscious of guilt, they hid themselves among the trees of the Garden—a faithful picture of great sinners in a thunderstorm in every age and clime. What was the thunderpeal? Only a blast of the trumpet, announcing the coming of the Judge. Immediately the assizes open, and the culprits stand their trial.

Probably, however, this view is too theatric. Preference should therefore be given to the quieter and more sober view, which represents God approaching the first man in the “human form Divine,” walking in the Garden, at the sound of whose foot-fall they feared and fled. Doubtless they expected the usual arrival of their Divine Counsellor. Their hearts wildly beating, and catching a sound as of a “going in the top of the mulberry trees,” they cast wistful glances, each adding to the terror of the other, and, when at last the familiar voice was heard, away they fled like guilty hounds from Him, who had always come to them with fulness of blessing. “Conscience does make cowards of us all.”

Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind;
The thief doth fear each bush an officer.¹

¹ Shakespeare, *Henry VI.*

The Hebrew for trees may be singular or plural. Some adopt the singular, according to which Adam and Eve are portrayed as hiding themselves between the branches of the Tree of Life, in the hope of recovering there what they had lost through eating of the Tree of Knowledge. Either way it amounts to the same thing—men are alienated from God and dread His presence. But though they will not seek Him, He will seek them. “And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?” This does not signify that the man had wandered beyond the circle of the Divine knowledge, only beyond the range of the Divine communion. Having been summoned to the Divine Presence, and made their lame confession, judgment is pronounced upon the culprits in the order of their transgression—the serpent, the woman, the man.

First of all, God judges the serpent: “And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.” That the serpent in its original form belonged to the genus of cattle and beasts, and was not a crawling reptile, was an opinion held by the older commentators, and even by many moderns. Others with greater propriety see no change of structure in the serpent, only that her natural state is aggravated. Whereas before she meandered along gracefully in the open, she now hides like a guilty thing in dark corners, a terror to everybody and by everybody abhorred. “Going upon the belly” is not a

penal degradation from an erect posture, but the gait natural to its organism.

“It is,” says Professor Owen, “a palæontological fact, that the ophidian peculiarities and complexities of organisation, in designed subserviency to a prone posture and a gliding progress on the belly, were given, together with the poison apparatus, by the Creator, when, in the progressive preparation of the dry land, but few, and those only of the lower organised species, now our contemporaries, had been called into existence—before any of the actual kinds of mammalia trod the earth, and long ages before the creation of man.”

This quotation is made, not with the simple purpose of showing that the serpent of geologic and the serpent of historic periods are in natural configuration identical, but for the further and more important purpose of proving that the diction wherein the curse is couched is too ample, the language too large, for the natural serpent; that, overlapping into the spiritual world, it finds its fitting object, not in the gliding, sinuous form hiding in the deep morass, but in the Spirit of Evil which found in it his fittest embodiment, whether in fact or figure. Upon him as the first instigator of evil the curse primarily fell, without present mitigation or hope of future amelioration in his condition: “Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.”

That the sin of the devil is beyond remedy, his fall beyond recovery, seems to be the consistent teaching of Holy Writ. This appears from two considerations. First, the sin of the tempter is self-originated, and to self-originated sin it would seem

there is no redemption. With man sin is not self-originated; this bitter herb is the produce of a rotten seed dropped into his heart from another world. It is an exotic, an element foreign to his nature, and therefore separation between him and it is possible. The angels

by their own suggestion fell,
 Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls, deceived
 By the other first; man therefore shall find grace,
 The other none. In mercy and justice both,
 Through heaven and earth, so shall my glory excel:
 But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.¹

Though a sinner, man is capable of salvation. But to the devil evil is indigenous; it grew up without any outward incitement, and consequently seems to be inextricably intertwined with the fibres of his being. Second, whereas the sin of man, though fraught with important consequences, began at the bottom of the scale, at the farthest remove possible from direct antagonism to God, the sin of the devil started at the summit, in flat contradiction to the sovereignty of the Almighty. His first sin was his greatest. Anything more heinous than the deposition of the Godhead and the usurpation by himself of the throne he can never again attempt. The essence of his sin is selfishness, a direct insolent attempt to make self supreme. Therefore he is incapable of self-denial in any form—he sacrifices all to himself, himself to nothing. Selfishness, however, is not the essence of human sin. True, men “serve the creature more than the Creator,” but that creature need not always be self; indeed, oftener than not, it is some

¹ *Paradise Lost*, Book III.

other creature. Among men, as there is disinterested virtue, so there is disinterested sin. Those therefore who endeavour to express the whole philosophy of sin by the one word "selfishness" are hardly correct. From these facts is deduced the conclusion, that the devil has somehow identified himself with evil, a divorce between him and sin being not practicable. He is beyond salvation; his wounds are everlasting because incurable.

In the case of man also the verdict of "Guilty" is returned, but "Guilty with extenuating circumstances." His sin is not beyond remedy, which seems to be the reason why God interfered graciously on our behalf, whilst He delivered the angels which kept not their first estate "into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." In pronouncing judgment on human sin, He holds out hope of pardon for the sinner. God curses the serpent, curses the ground, but He nowhere curses man. The maledictions of heaven descend after the Fall a heavy shower; but, as we say in Wales, it is rain through sunshine, and serves to paint, on the black thunderclouds overhanging the Garden, a beautiful rainbow of promise. The guilty pair are driven out of Paradise, but, marching arm-in-arm, sad and disconsolate, their countenances brighten, their eyes sparkle, as, passing out through the portals of Eden, they behold with admiration the lovely Bow of the Covenant of Grace overarching their sky. Hope still remains. Herein is the clue to the Greek fable of Pandora's box.

I. The first man is here placed in a state of discipline: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat it all the days of thy life;

thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (vers. 17, 18). "*For thy sake*" is capable of two interpretations.

Because of thy sin the earth must be blasted with comparative barrenness. So close is the connection between the moral and physical, that the transgression of man brought down a devastating blight upon nature. The apostasy of man meant the thralldom and the frustration of the energies of nature, "as a kingdom falls with its king." Commenting according to his wont on this passage, St. Paul gives us as far-reaching a piece of imaginative writing as can anywhere be found; but, because it is imagination, let no one think it is fiction. "The creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. . . For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. viii. 20-22). A thinker of less ethical intensity than St. Paul might call this description morbid, exaggerated, sentimental. But view nature from a moral standpoint, and every word finds its instant justification. Account for it as we may, a wail of sorrow pervades the universe. The wind, coursing along, moans in every tree and mourns round every corner. Go to the seaside, and every wave dies with a groan. Listen to the blackbird—whilst there is unutterable sweetness in his whistle, yet underneath all his notes there is an undertone of sadness. There is not a bird in the forest which does not touch the minor key. Hear the bleating of the lamb, and note therein the tremor of sorrow. Ascend up to man, and suffering dominates his history. There are languages like the

Welsh, tearful and burdened with grief, half blown away by the wind. Very significant is it that the first word of Greek poetry should be "Alas!" "Alas! Linus." To most of us no poetry is so delightful as that which helps us to weep, no music so sweet as that which carries infinite sadness in its heart.

Everything in nature seems abortive; nothing realises its destiny, achieving the full purpose of its creation. When man fell, nature grew sick; the curse of God laid hold of the core of the world; the whole creation "*groaneth and travaileth in pain*" like a woman in childbirth. Inhabitants of towns may think the language exaggerated, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," but countrymen know better. Not so far from truth as might at first sight appear is the ancient fancy that the world is a living animal. Near my native home lies a swampy meadow. On calm, frosty nights screams of anguish were often heard; men would grow ill in sympathy with the pain of creation. I myself heard the groaning, time and again. Ever since, St. Paul's figure has been to me the most vivid and real in all literature. The simple folk of the neighbourhood often heard it, and their vivid imagination pictured nature as a lady in white slain by her unappeasable foes. Science explains the phenomenon by the contracting power of frost, cracking and rending the swamp. But oh, the scream of pain, the cry of agony, from the very heart of creation, making the flesh shiver as in the presence of a disconsolate ghost! Science cannot explain that. However, Moses in Genesis and Paul in the Romans furnish the solution: "Cursed is the ground for thy

sake." "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

"Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee." The idea is not that now thorns and thistles were first created, but that, instead of unfolding into their full splendour and usefulness, they would deteriorate into stunted, dwarfish growths, unable to realise their true destiny. The thorns, fully developed, make the rose bushes, which gratify the eye with the richness of their colour, and delight the nostrils with the sweetness of their fragrance. The thistle, fully unfolded, produces the glorious cactus flower; but under the curse it has been frustrated and marred, has become a prodigal among the herbs of the field, and is an eye-sore and vexation of spirit to the husbandman. What was intended for use and ornament has been perverted into physical evil and abortion. Clearly perceiving the close connection between the moral and the physical, Bishop Butler long ago taught that the laws of nature are favourable to virtue, but inimical to vice. His argument refurbished and applied to Providence is Mr. Matthew Arnold's well-known saying that "there is in the world a power, not ourselves, making for righteousness." But the power, which protects righteousness, at the same time militates against unrighteousness. From the beginning until now, when man rebels against God nature revolts against man; when man refuses to yield to the Supreme the harvest of a holy life, the earth declines to give to man the fruit of her increase. Because of the apostasy of humanity, Nature has been turned aside from the normal path

of her development. A truth this much accentuated and enlarged upon by the prophets of Israel, and abundantly verified in the present day by a comparison of the fertility of the land in Christian and in heathen countries.

Another signification of the phrase "*for thy sake*" is, for thy good, to promote thy well-being. That this is exegetically correct may be questioned, but the truth this interpretation conveys is undeniable and in deepest harmony with the whole tenor of Holy Writ. Idleness, ease of life, abundance of luxuries without corresponding labour, would only aggravate our sinful condition. To sinless man the ease of the Paradisiac life were a boon, for his leisure he would utilise to pierce more deeply into the secrets of nature and to cultivate closer fellowship with the spiritual world. To a man already weighted with sinful propensities, however, too much leisure would only multiply his opportunities to sink deeper in the mire. Never stand still in a bog; safety consists in passing on as rapidly and lightly as possible. In mercy God made hard labour a condition of the continuance of life: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken" (vers. 22, 23). Originally he was placed inside the Garden "to dress it and keep it,"—where he would meet with difficulties enough to stimulate his powers of invention, but where his efforts would be exempt from

exhaustion, continuousness, and over-fatigue. In the Edenic state the inherent intractableness of nature would present opposition enough to call forth whatever mechanical skill and artistic capabilities he possessed. The idea that sin was indispensable to the rise of the arts and sciences has here no countenance. Is it not nearer the truth to say that, instead of hastening, sin delayed their development? But in consequence of the Fall he is sent out of the Garden to till the surrounding district, which was less amenable to cultivation than the enclosed park. Add to this the impoverishment of the soil as the result of the curse, and you will perceive that the labour which was before enjoyable and exhilarating is converted into a burden and a vexation. Yet in this lies the hope of man's recovery; this hard task is allotted him quite as much in mercy as in judgment.

With the expulsion of man from Paradise began the Economy of Divine Grace: "So God drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim and a Flaming Sword which turned every way." Who was the driver? Divine Justice? Not it alone, else it would drive man to hell-fire before stopping. In whose hands is the Sword of Flame? In the hands of Justice? Nay, else man would have been forthwith executed; but in the hands of the Cherubim—symbols, wherever they are found, of Divine Grace. Without entering into the intricate discussion concerning the nature, form, and functions of these mystic figures, suffice it to say that wherever they appear they are always emblems of God's presence to bless. We

live now, therefore, under a mixed dispensation. It is not all justice, for the Cherubim stand there, the unmistakable representatives of God's mercy. It is not all grace, for the Sword of Flame is there, always ready to execute judgment. Yes, a glittering sword is ever brandished in front of guilty man, mysteriously "turning every way," and by its strange revolutions driving him back to the path of duty and obedience. If he wander far, the sword will smite him all of a sudden. But the sword is in the hands of Divine Grace—longsuffering and forbearance characterise all Divine visitations. The truth here emblemated is that man now lives under a complex dispensation of punishment and discipline. He is sent forth to the wilderness to till its arid soil; but, cultivating the earth, he refines his own heart; uprooting the thorns and thistles in the field, he eradicates simultaneously the lusts and covetous desires growing rank in his own nature. Man is drilled to restraint on the one hand, to holiness on the other. The course is long, but the final issue will be compensation enough for all the trials of the journey: "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby" (Heb. xii. 11). True this of the individual, true also of the race.

Not long ago an ever-memorable view of the heavens was witnessed, a grand panorama, on the coast of Cardigan Bay. As the day was drawing to a close, big black clouds gathered themselves together for miles upon the horizon. At a distance, they seemed like the wreck of ten thousand worlds

scattered about in wildest confusion, mountains and towers thrown helter-skelter together, crags and precipices piled on one another in rankest disorder, and here and there a valley turned upside down in the midst of chaos. Gradually the sun descended the slope of the firmament, and became lost to sight behind the huge mass of solid darkness. Presently it was evident that a terrible struggle was going on in the west; anon the fringe of the chaos became tinged with gold, the dark mass heaved up and down in endless convolutions, ere long it shattered into ten million rose leaves—there they lay like a harvest of red roses in most lavish profusion; and the sun set, having transfigured the clouds, and rose the following morning, having utterly chased them away. Thus looking back to the history of the Fall in the third chapter of Genesis, in the far-off horizon of time, we see big, black, ominous clouds gathered together and hiding Paradise from view. Presently God is seen descending the brow of the heavens, towards sundown, in the cool of the evening. One might rashly conclude that He also is lost in the weltering ruins. But anon the fringe of the chaos begins to be tinged, the promise of the woman's Seed to bruise the serpent's head gilds the clouds with brightest gold, the dark mass begins to break, the whole firmament of history is variegated with light and shade and all the seven colours; gradually the whole scene will be transformed into the unsullied light of the everlasting day.

From the dark we generally obtain the bright. From the dark earth comes the gas which lights our homes. From the bitterest herbs are extracted the

most efficacious medicines. From the blackness of coal are evolved the most sunlike diamonds. Under the overruling Providence of God, sin will also be made to redound to the glory of His name, and to contribute to the good of our race. This reconciles us to the fact. As we read Genesis and witness the havoc and devastation it works there, our souls tumble up and down within us, and we marvel in the depths of our spirits that God should permit such a monster to obtrude his presence in the world; but when we glance over the last chapter of the Revelation of St. John the Divine, and behold the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, our sorrow is turned into joy. Studying the opening chapters of the Bible, we are immeasurably saddened at the sight of man banished from his home into the wilderness; but when we follow him through all his labyrinthine wanderings and see him emerge out of the howling desert, and safely sheltered, not under the green bowers of another Eden, but in the stately mansions of the New Jerusalem, polished after the similitude of a palace, we praise God for the necessity which sent him a wanderer.

II. Let it be further marked that "unto Adam also, and unto his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."

"God knoweth," said the tempter, "that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened." Writers of rationalistic sympathies declare this to be a step forward in knowledge, a discovery of value, and sin to be necessary in order to make it. Hence the Fall, they say, was a Fall upward. To reason thus, how-

ever, is altogether to miss the point of the narrative. There is an opening of eyes, which is loss, not gain. "He lifted up his eyes, being in torments." The enlightenment here is in the bad, not the good, sense. Hear the confession of the young man, raw and green, after his first visit to London. He met there with a man of plausible appearance and fair words. He listened and followed, thinking the company reflected distinction on himself, and was the first step in the ladder of social advancement. Submitting to his bland persuasion, he followed him into a house of entertainment ; he came out—robbed of his money, despoiled of his watch, divested of his self-respect. His eyes were opened, and he saw that he was naked. Was that an advance, a development, a fall upward in his career ? Ask him, and his eyes, glowing like flames of fire, will give you the lie direct. Better be blind than see the revelry. In his country home he saw God and Nature and Goodness ; to evil he was blind. The opening of his eyes to the midnight orgies is the one damnable spot in his history. The promise always ends in bitter disappointment and sore humiliation. That was exactly the opening of the eyes Adam and Eve experienced. Incited by curiosity, Eve beguiled Adam to join her to look behind the curtain. What did they see ? Sin, guilt, fear, shame, death. Better had their eyes never been thus opened !

But before they were naked, now they are clothed ; is not that progress ? Is not raiment generally an index to a man's place in the scale of civilisation ? Where pure savagery prevails, men go utterly naked ; the moment they emerge from unmixed barbarism,

they go about partly clad ; where civilisation is firmly established, men garment themselves from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. Nakedness is a sign of barbarism, clothes of civilisation. This reasoning, however, is more plausible than true. Even now the two extremes of existence are, by the highest art, always represented in a state of nudity—the babe and the god. The babe is not ashamed of its nakedness, not because it wants sensibility, but because it lacks sinful consciousness. Where the motions of sin are absent, drapery is superfluous. At the other end is the god. A god clothed is no god. Art at its highest is always nude. The ideal needs no clothing, having no defects to hide. The need of clothing arises with the consciousness of imperfection. Hence, where the sense of the ideal is not awakened, and the consciousness of disagreement between body and spirit is not evoked, as in the babe and barbarian, clothing is a redundancy. On the other hand, where the ideal is reached, where no discord between the corporeal and spiritual obtains, as in the god, raiment is superfluous.

Adam and Eve in their Paradisiacal state experienced no conflict, no rent in their consciousness ; the ideal and actual corresponded : hence no shame, and therefore no clothing. But once they sinned they became painfully conscious of the dissonance, and instinctively endeavoured to ignore the gap by covering it. In the first instance, then, clothing denotes a consciousness of moral delinquency. But the fact that they are ashamed is to their credit. The more the shame, the worthier of respect ; and thus, secondarily, clothing becomes a sign of civilisation.

The devil sinned, and is not ashamed; always in the presence of God he is insolent, sarcastic, brazen-faced. His shamelessness is his damnation. On the other hand, the shame of Adam and Eve affords a sure evidence that their reclamation is possible. Had men not sinned, would they ever remain unclothed? I cannot tell. But art is not dependent on fashions; it aims at nobler ideals than the reproduction of Elizabethan costumes or the imitation of Parisian *modes*. Perfect art is perfect nudity.

Adam and Eve "sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." "But unto them God made coats of skins, and clothed them." Where did the skins come from? Here we are confronted with a problem which has much exercised the theologic mind—Is sacrifice a human invention or a Divine appointment? The supposition that our first parents, remorseful and deeply conscious of their need of pardon, should endeavour to propitiate the offended Judge by the offering of a sacrifice carries with it no intrinsic incongruity. Many able theologians, therefore, such as Bähr and Tholuck, have adopted, with variations, this view. But for this instinct of human nature to embody itself in a suitable outward ceremony time was requisite—more time than the history seems to allow. Hence I incline to the view that sacrifice is a Divine institution, not in contradiction, but rather in perfect conformity, with the deepest instincts of human nature. To me there is poetic grandeur in the view that as God offered the last sacrifice on Calvary so He officiated at the first sacrifice in Eden! I like to trace the scarlet line of continuity, without a break, all the way from

Paradise to Golgotha! With the skins of the animals slain in sacrifice He clothed the nakedness of the shame of the first sinners. This is not distinctly stated; but we should remember that a period longer than the Christian era is compressed into two or three chapters in Genesis. In the reflected light of the remainder of Divine Revelation, and in the light of the human nature shared by us as well as by them, we must try to fill the hiatus.

Assuming the Divine origin of sacrifices, can we imagine that God gave the trembling, astonished spectators no enlightenment concerning its import? The promulgation of the promise, the institution of sacrifice, the investiture of Adam and Eve, their expulsion from the Garden, the placing of the Cherubim and the Sword of Fire to the east of Eden, was not a transaction of five minutes. Probably it took as many hours, nay, as many days, when God and our first parents were in constant fellowship, and when the latter learnt more about the way of Salvation than we are ready to give them credit for. Whereas the older theologians probably magnified their knowledge, moderns seem to delight in reducing it to the lowest possible minimum. Indeed, their knowledge is represented as so misty and vague that it differs in nothing from blank ignorance. The golden mean is doubtless the best. They possessed not the definite conceptions of New Testament saints; at the same time they could not have been left to dreamy, uncertain guesswork, without a firm rock for faith to put down the sole of her foot. Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah believed. The question naturally arises, What in? They must have

had a firm grip on some of the fundamental truths of revealed religion, else they could never have withstood steadfastly the terrible shock of ungodliness in the antediluvian world. In the primal revelation a foundation sufficiently strong must have been given to bear the superstructure of the following millenniums.

Whatever may have been the limitations of Adam's knowledge of Salvation, our knowledge is clear and definite. The best solution to the mystery of the Fall through the first Adam is the mystery of the Rise through the Second Adam. Call to mind once more St. Paul's parallel and contrast between them. Whatever objections we may be inclined to urge against the arrangements of God's Providence, they are all more than met when we review the ordinances of His Grace. "By the disobedience of one many were made sinners." Against such an arrangement our will rebels, we protest in indignant tones; why should the disobedience of Adam involve us in sin? Why should an act performed six thousand years ago entail misery on me? Why should it embitter my time and imperil my eternity? Why am I subjected to suffering because of what another did millenniums before I was ushered into existence? Such impious questionings do arise in the heart, and there is no suppressing them. "By the disobedience of one many were made sinners." Is there any remedy? Yes; "so by the obedience of One many shall be made righteous." We have no objection to partake of the benefits which come through Christ: that should reconcile us to the ills which came through Adam. What is it any of us have to

complain of? Do we complain that God should so arrange the events of Providence as to make us partakers of the sin of our race without our knowledge or consent? This is the way wherein Divine Revelation meets us—God is this very moment holding out to us the relief which we need, He offers to extricate us from our racial and personal sin, on the simple condition of implicit trust in Him.

Close to the disease is the cure. The Israelites were bitten by serpents in the wilderness. Many a speculative man in the camp might wonder why God should create serpents. They are not good for food, neither are they good for service; apparently they are good for nothing except to bite and kill. He might utter violent complaints against the Divine Wisdom and Goodness in creating serpents at all. But if the God who made the serpent to bite ordered another Serpent of Brass to heal all who turned their eyes in its direction, certainly the ground of complaint is taken from under his feet. So speculative Englishmen wonder that God permitted sin to contaminate our nature, and utter their murmurs accordingly; but when God has from the beginning provided a way to wash away the stain, surely it were wisdom on our part to hold our peace and silence our objections. In the West Indies there grows, it is said, a tree called the machaneel. Its appearance is specially attractive and its wood particularly beautiful; it bears an apple resembling our golden pippin. This fruit looks tempting and smells fragrant; but to eat of it is certain death. So poisonous is its sap or juice that, if a few drops fall on the hand, it blisters the

skin and inflicts acute pain. The Indians were wont to dip their arrows in the juice, that, wounding their enemies, they might poison them. No doubt many a poor, stricken man felt prompted to blame the wisdom of the Creator for making a tree so fair to the eyes, yet so deadly in its sap and fruit. But Providence has so appointed it that one of these trees is never found but near it grows a white wood or fig tree, the sap of which, if applied in time, soothes the irritation occasioned by the poison of the other : counterparts these of the two trees in the Garden of Eden. This fact equalises things wonderfully. Thus people complain because the Tree of Knowledge was placed in the same garden as man. And without contradiction, to us who can only perceive the surface of things, it does look strange. But it is forgotten or overlooked that God planted there also the "Tree of Life in the midst of the garden," equidistant from all the corners. Sin looks pleasant to the eye ; men desire of it, eat, and die. But the remedy is at hand. "Is there not balm in Gilead? Is there not a physician there? Why therefore is the hurt of the daughter of My people not healed?"

Are you burdened with the multitude of your sins? God has grace enough to wipe them all away. "For the judgment was by one offence to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification." You may demur to the sentence of condemnation because of one offence, it may appear harsh, severe, arbitrary ; but over against it is the free gift unto justification, despite not one, but one million offences. "By one offence death reigned by

one," and you find grave fault that one man through one offence should entail misery on the millions of mankind ; but over against it is the assurance, " much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ." After balancing the accounts, there remains a "surplus [*περισσειά*] of grace." God's character is vindicated.

III. Contemplate further the seminal promise of Salvation. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," are the words addressed by God to the foe of man. Three stages are discernible in this promise of victory.

The first is the engendering of enmity between the serpent and the woman, the tempter and the tempted. The alliance between the evil spirit and Adam and Eve is abruptly sundered. The sudden revulsion of feeling which possessed our first parents on the discovery of their nakedness and shame, the sense of fiery indignation kindled in their breasts against the duplicity of the seducer, were favourable to win them over once more to the side of God and goodness, and to establish perpetual hatred in them to the spirit of evil. That they sinned oft in after-years cannot be doubted ; still to the spirit of evil they presented uniform hostility. The verse, "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living," contains an intimation that they now passed over from a state of sin to a state of grace. Formerly Adam called his wife Isha ; now he names her Havvâh (Eve)—a change of name

indicative of a change of objective relation to God and subjective relation to sin. They passed over from a state of condemnation to a state of salvation. After this the curtain is practically dropped on the unhappy pair. Not once again are their names recorded in the Old Testament, except perhaps in Hos. vii. 6, and there the reference is doubtful. On the pages of the four Gospels their names are not recorded once, except in St. Luke's genealogical table. The Lord Jesus mentions Abel and Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, David, and Isaiah ; but not once do the names of Adam and Eve drop over His sacred lips. Divine propriety dictates reserve respecting the man and woman who wrought such a terrible catastrophe in the Divine government of the world. " They themselves were saved, yet so as by fire."

The second stage is the antagonism between the serpent's seed and the woman's seed. That these terms convey an ethical, not a physical, meaning is clear. Immediately after, the human race is seen divided into two seeds or camps, that of Cain and that of Seth. The inner, ethical relation between them is enmity. It began in the murder of Abel, the woman's seed, by Cain, the serpent's seed. The enmity has been restrained, checked, civilised, but it has never been extinguished : " All that will live godly shall suffer persecution " (2 Tim. iii. 12). The whole of Church history, whether under the Old or the New Testament, is only an account of this Holy Crusade, the warfare between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, between the forces of good and the forces of evil, between the Church and the world. In Old Testament times

the victory oftenest lay with the brood of the serpent ; once and again the Church was so hard pressed that the very last sparks of true religion seemed on the verge of extinction. The tide of battle flowed in favour of the seed of the serpent, and the permanent victory of evil over good was well-nigh secured.

The third stage arrived when all the energies of good were gathered together in One—pre-eminently the Seed of the woman. There is evermore a tendency in evil and in good to gather into a head, to concentrate themselves in distinguished personages. The forces of nature raise mountains ; the forces of mind produce geniuses ; the forces of evil produce villains ; the forces of good make saints. In accordance with this general law, though not in virtue of it alone, the seed of the woman culminated at last in the Seed *par excellence* : “ In the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, made of a woman.” Singular that the Seed of the Woman should be the term used. Everywhere else it is the seed of the man—the seed of Abraham, the seed of David : here the Seed of the Woman. The singularity of the name points to an anomaly in the Seed ; is it a dark prefiguration of the mystery of the Incarnation ?

At last the Seed appeared, turned the tide of battle, and secured the ultimate triumph of the human race over all the powers of darkness. The serpent and the Seed met in a terrible encounter in the wilderness : “ Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou

serve. Then the devil leaveth Him" (Matt. iv. 10, 11). In this encounter man wins the victory. Adam fell in a garden; Christ stood in a wilderness. Adam apostatised in the midst of plenty; Christ remained steadfast when He was an hungred. "The devil cometh, but he hath nothing in Me." "Now is the judgment [*κρίσις*] of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John xii. 31). "Now is your hour, and the power of darkness." The two champions meet, the Champion of Good and the Champion of Evil. What is the issue of the combat?—"Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself" (Col. ii. 15). Victory always rests, not with the party who wins the first battle, but with the party who wins the last. The devil conquered man in Eden; man conquered the devil on Calvary. Ever since the Seed of the woman is routing the seed of the serpent; the kingdom of light is ever enlarging its territory, and the reign of darkness is contracting in the reverse ratio. The victory of good is now certain; and we only await the cry of the angel: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15).

This is one of the distinctive notes of Revealed Religion, Hebrew and Christian—faith in the ultimate triumph of good over evil. All heathen religions, Aryan and Semitic, hug to their hearts the incubus of pessimism; according to all of them the ages degenerate, mankind deteriorate. Gold, silver, brass, iron—that is the order of history, till

it reaches its goal in the destruction of the race. But turn to the Hebrew religion, and you come across a wholly different class of ideas. Admitting a terrible Fall in the past, it cherishes hope in the human breast, hope of victory over the powers of sin and suffering, till at last it culminates in Christian optimism—a blessed assurance that God is stronger than the Devil, that Good will triumph over Evil, that Virtue will conquer Vice, that Health will overcome Disease, that Life will swallow up Death. Of all the literatures of antiquity, the Hebrew Bible alone is optimistic. How do you account for it?

CHAPTER XII

CAIN AND ABEL : EVIL AND GOOD

AT the birth of her firstborn, Eve rejoiced greatly, and “called his name Cain, saying, I have gotten a man—Jehovah.” Whatever be the precise signification of the phrase, it indubitably demonstrates that large, ennobling thoughts were fermenting in her mind, and that she was not in a state of helpless ignorance concerning the Promised Seed. She knew that, if the child were not Jehovah Himself in human nature—according to Luther’s translation, in which he is followed by Schmidt, Pfeiffer, Baumgarten, and others—he was at all events a special gift of Jehovah, a pledge of the Divine favour.¹ But observing the odd, queer ways of her firstborn, his sullen disposition, his irascible temper, his fierce looks, the mother did not feel so hopeful and buoyant at the birth of the second child ; therefore she called

¹ “The use of the name [Jehovah] is significant, though we cannot think that Eve already knew this name of God, which was first revealed to man at a later period of his history, and which is of Hebrew origin, whereas that language probably did not exist until the time of the dispersion at Babel. Yet, doubtless, the historian expresses the true meaning of Eve’s speech, which she spoke, inspired by that help which had been graciously given her of God” (Keil, *Com., in loco*).

his name Abel, which, being interpreted, is vapour, vanity, grief. Some suppose that this name was given him retrospectively by succeeding generations in view of his premature death; but seeing Eve named the first and the third—Cain and Seth—it is more natural to assume that she named the second also, calling him Abel—Breath, Vanity, a sure indication of her then inward experience.

Only three of Adam's sons are mentioned by name—Cain, Abel, Seth; but the historian distinctly adds that "the days of Adam, after he had begotten Seth, were eight hundred years, and he begat sons and daughters." Considering that his life extended to nine hundred and thirty years, his family in the course of nature must have grown very numerous. Only three, however, are known by name, because probably they were the three eminently destined to influence subsequent history. The others were ordinary men and women, possessing no marked features, requiring no special mention, endeavouring as best they could to discharge the duties of everyday life, exhibiting the virtues and subject to the infirmities which have characterised the race through all time. But Cain, Abel, and Seth were not ordinary men; their names are mentioned with anathema or affection down to the present day.

For all practical purposes, Abel and Seth may be reckoned as one, for they were of the same ethical type, and ordained to fulfil the same function in the history of redemption: "Eve bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew" (iv. 25). How did she know? If simply in the

power of maternal instinct, what a grand, intelligent, holy woman she must have been! More probably, she received, as Rebecca did in after-years, a revealed intimation respecting the particular line in which the Promised Seed should appear. Genesis is a record of Divine revelation, but not a full record, especially of the earliest dispensation. It is easy to perceive by the language and religious customs of the antediluvian saints that they obtained communications from heaven, which are not detailed, only assumed. To estimate this primitive history at its proper value, it is expedient that we bear in mind that the busy life of two millenniums is condensed into two chapters. Godly imagination, illumined by scholarship, and guided by common sense, must fill the gaps.

The two brothers grew up. The elder became a tiller of the ground, helped his father to dig, sow, plant, and reap, led an agricultural life. The second became a shepherd, watching over flocks of sheep and goats and herds of cattle—an avocation for which his gentle, amiable disposition singularly fitted him. The milk was now wanted for the fast increasing family, the wool and skins were needed for garments, the carcasses required for sacrifice, and probably also for food. One boy was told off to look after the land, the other to supervise the flock. "Abel was a keeper of sheep; but Cain was a tiller of the ground." Thus the Bible account upsets the theory favoured by rationalists and materialistic scientists, that mankind began life as hunters, then became shepherds, and last of all developed into agriculturalists.

The two callings possibly indicate different dis-

positions in the two brothers. Cain was passionate, strong-willed, self-reliant, conscious of energy sufficient to conquer the intractableness of the soil and countervail the effects of the curse. Abel, on the contrary, was quiet, meditative, sympathetic, much addicted to solitary thinking, always ready to help man and beast. What Esau and Jacob were in the family of Isaac, that probably were Cain and Abel in the household of Adam. People speak of family likenesses, but there are family unlikenesses too. Have you observed how opposite are the tendencies of those two boys of yours? One is wild, adventurous, untamable, talks of going to sea, and wants to know what a lion-hunt in Africa is like, and there he will be sooner than you imagine. The other is retiring, thoughtful, studious, horrified at the idea of going to the primeval forest to fight lions and tigers ; but is determined to go to the more renowned universities, there to contend valiantly with men harder to beat than any wild beasts in African or Indian jungles. In the first family these constitutional differences were likely more marked and pronounced than in families since. Adam and Eve comprehended the genus : he was the typical man, she the typical woman. In them every specific type of character and variety of disposition had their roots ; from their loins, therefore, men of diametrically opposite propensities sprang. Types in men, like breeds in animals, may gradually be hardened, stereotyped, perpetuated ; but at the dawn of history they had not had time to set. The greatest variety prevailed in the family of Adam ; hence intermarriages between brothers and sisters in his home, apart from

the necessity of the situation, were justifiable on the deepest physiological ground.

I. Whilst there existed probably a marked difference in the physical constitutions and intellectual predilections of the two brothers, Cain and Abel, yet the main difference was moral. Cain remained in a state of unregeneracy, whereas Abel became heir of the promise that the Seed of the woman should finally triumph over the seed of the serpent. "By faith," writes the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying to his gifts; and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh" (Heb. xi. 4). That is the apostolic commentary on this passage in Genesis, and, following it, we cannot go far astray.

The two brothers differed in their worship of God, because they fundamentally diverged in the ruling principles of their lives. Abel possessed faith, and faith has always regard to the Divine and supernatural. Faith is not a natural faculty in the soul, like reason, imagination, memory, or conscience, but a supernatural gift. "Faith is the gift of God," but a gift always bestowed on those morally qualified to receive it. Natural faculties are imparted at birth; therefore, if without them in infancy, we must be without them the remainder of our days. But faith, being a Divine gift, we may obtain at the age of twenty, forty, or sixty. Faith thus presupposes a supernatural revelation, the supernatural subjective demanding a supernatural objective on which to lay hold. Abel believed. Believed in whom? In God.

But what did he know about God to believe in Him? Here comes in the revelation the Supreme was pleased to make of the purposes of His grace to his parents immediately after their transgression—the promise of the Seed to bruise the serpent's head, the institution of the symbolical rite of sacrifice, the setting up of an organised mode of worship to the east of the Garden of Eden, in front of the Cherubim and the Flame of Fire. That is the Supernatural Revelation which again brought hope to man. I designate it supernatural, because the mind working upon nature would have never discovered it. It is not a discovery of Adam, but a revelation of God. In a few verses is related the pith and substance of a transaction extending, no doubt, over several hours, and which, if reported in full, in its attenuated form, would illumine many a phrase which now appears dark—dark because we do not take the trouble to spread it out, that we may see the inner contents.

Adam and Eve, in the full vigour of their intellect, fresh and strong, notwithstanding the stain of sin, pondered deeply, no doubt, over the gracious revelation the Almighty had vouchsafed them. They conversed much about it, assisting each other to apprehend its full significance; and if the conjecture of some of the most pious, as well as of the most learned commentators, be right, that God did not at once withhold His theophanies, but that, as occasion required, He appeared visibly to men, in accordance with the intimations contained in this fourth chapter, and solved many a riddle which was too hard for their unaided understanding, the resultant intelligence was not inconsiderable. What they them-

selves had received and understood, they naturally strove to impress on the minds of their children, for on the faithful transmission and the strict observance of these truths depended the present and future salvation of the race. What more reasonable than that they should tell them the story of the Fall, expatiate on the promise of the Seed of the woman to destroy the works of evil, give accurate account of the institution of sacrifice, its symbolical meaning, the regulations concerning its observance, the Divine instructions to them concerning the meat-offering and the burnt-offering—the two offerings whose history is clearly traceable from Eden down to Calvary? The first family was a Church, where religious instruction was imparted and religious observances were maintained. Sufficient evidence is the public worship of the two brothers at an appointed time in an appointed place. Cain listened, understood, but his heart gave no vital response. Abel heard, drank in the glad tidings, believed in God's method of salvation, conformed his life thereto, and his faith was counted to him for righteousness. Cain, says St. John, was of the "wicked one"—the firstborn of the serpent's brood; Abel trusted in the Divine assurance of the ultimate triumph of good over evil—the firstborn of the woman's Seed. The antithesis is not physical or intellectual, but ethical. Instead of moral affinity, there is spiritual repulsion. The conflict of the ages begins.

II. The moral difference between the two brothers manifested itself in their public worship.

The Bible does not concern itself—nor does any other book—so much about the secret devotion of private

individuals, as with religion in its public character, as it affects the course of sacred history. Misapprehension of this truth has blurred the sight of many expositors. If others were not present when Cain and Abel made their oblations, who would be alive to tell the story? The fact that the narrative has come down to us is proof enough that there were other witnesses of the scene here depicted. At the birth of Seth Adam was one hundred and thirty years old (chap. v. 3); the historian joins the birth of Seth to the martyrdom of Abel, the two events doubtless occurring within an interval of a few years. This enables us to fix approximately the date of the events here recorded—when Adam was about one hundred and twenty years old.

“In process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of the flock, and of the fat thereof.” “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” Putting these texts in juxtaposition, we gather that the first family had an established order of worship, an order enlarged, developed, and carefully reduced to writing in the Hebrew economy. Beautiful is it to think that between the Church before, and the Church after, the Flood, there was an unbroken continuity in the method of worship. By this is not intended that in elaborateness and environments great differences did not prevail, but that the central nucleus was under every dispensation identical. If the Mosaic sacrificial system is represented as an absolutely new beginning, where is the much-vaunted doctrine of development?

The first family had evidently a stated time to appear before the Lord. The two brothers met simultaneously at the altar to offer their oblation: "In process of time"; in the margin, "at the end of days." What time was this? The majority of commentators, so far as I am able to learn, favour the view that the words refer to a sacred festival, probably at the end of harvest, when all Adam's family were wont to meet to render thanksgiving to God. Throughout the antediluvian and patriarchal eras, however, I detect no trace of special festivals, and am therefore reluctant arbitrarily to insert one here. Consequently the view that the reference is to the end of the days of the week, the Sabbath day, commends itself to me.

Already the "seventh day" stands forth as specially blessed and hallowed. In this chapter Lamech speaks of "seven" and "seventy times seven." In the story of the Deluge, Noah reckons time by the mysterious number seven. All this constrains us to conclude that a week of seven days is an institution co-eval with humanity, founded really, not artificially, on the creation week. The sun divides time into years, the moon into months, the diurnal rotation of the earth on its axis into days; the Sabbath alone divides it into weeks.

Not many years ago, not only avowed sceptics, but theologians of repute, infected by the spirit which was in the air, denied the primeval antiquity of the Sabbath. Professor Davidson, whose scholarship commands universal respect, in his *Introduction to the Old Testament* devoted several pages to demonstrate that the Sabbath is an institution no older

than the age of Moses. Since then, Assyrian and Babylonian monuments have spoken; and what do they disclose? Calendar tablets, preserved in the royal library of Assurbanipal, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks—copies of Accadian inscriptions dating back, according to Mr. George Smith, to beyond 2000 B.C., centuries before Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees—show the Sabbath to be even then a venerable public institution. The very word “Sabbatu” is distinctly visible; the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth days of the month of Elul are distinctly styled “Sabbaths.” Elsewhere the Sabbath is paraphrased as a “day of rest for the heart,” and the regulations for its observance are as strict and rigorous as any prescribed by Jewish Pharisaism. Is it not perfectly safe to assume that these old Accadians, living the centuries immediately following the Flood, obtained the Sabbath as a precious heritage, from the world before the Flood? And is it not remarkable that every new discovery in archæology corroborates the historical veracity of the Bible? A critic, demurring to Copernicus’ theory of the solar system, said: “If the worlds were constructed as you say, Venus would have phases like the moon; she has none, however; how do you answer that?” The illustrious astronomer, possessing his soul in patience, with great reverence replied, “I have no answer to give to that; but God will be so good as to permit that an answer to this difficulty be found.” Soon after, the newly invented telescope was directed towards Venus, and, lo, Venus had her phases like the moon. Sceptical critics through the centuries raise new objections

against the Bible, and doubtless will continue to do so ; and, because the answer is not ready when the objection is first urged, they raise a shout of triumph. But God is always "so good" as in time to furnish His Church with an answer. Believers in the Bible, judging from past experience, await the further disclosures of Oriental archæology without a tremor.

The further inference, that the first family had a fixed place whereat to offer their worship, is incontrovertibly legitimate. Cain did not repair to one altar and Abel to another, but the two met at the one appointed sanctuary—an open-air sanctuary may be, but a sanctuary all the same. Where was that? The last verse of the preceding chapter furnishes the answer—to the east of the Garden of Eden, where God "placed" the Cherubim and the Flaming Sword. The word for "placed" is the root of the term Shekinah, and throws considerable light on the narrative. God gave there a visible sign of His presence. To us, with our metaphysical modes of thinking, this is hard of realisation. Yet if we believe in the Bible at all, we must believe in the Flame of Fire called the Shekinah, a supernatural Radiance, a resplendent Cloud, scattering brilliance all around. It appeared unto Abraham like a burning lamp ; to the Israelites in the wilderness it became a cloud of glory ; in the Tabernacle it dwelt a bright Flame, with the Eye of God all aglow like a sun in the centre. This physical token of the Divine Presence was also granted the Church before the Flood. There it was, to the east of Eden, a live Flame, hovering over and between the Cherubim—in shape

like a curved sword or scimitar, coiling and whirling in strange convolutions.

There the first family regularly assembled for public worship, at length a large congregation. Statisticians have put down the population of the world at the time of Abel's death at some tens of thousands. In 1852, the descendants of Jonathan Edwards, the illustrious American divine, agreed to celebrate the centenary of his death. How many, think you, came together? Not less than two thousand. And if President Edwards, in one hundred years, multiplied into two thousand people able to join intelligently in the festivities, it is a presumptive proof that the first family did not increase at a smaller ratio. A grand spectacle that! Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and the other sons and daughters, meeting every Sabbath morn at the appointed hour, to the east of the Garden of Eden, in front of the Cherubim and the Flame of Fire, to adore the God who had created them, against whom they had rebelled, but who had graciously promised to forgive them on their penitence and faith!

That a prescribed mode of worship was already laid down and recognised the story unmistakably suggests. Our first parents observed the directions they received from God, offered their sacrifices, and brought up the children to follow their example: "At the end of days it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering [mincha] unto the Lord; and Abel brought [a mincha]; he also brought of the firstlings of the flock, and of the fat thereof." That rendering is believed to convey the correct meaning.

The *mincha* consisted of corn, or corn made into bread (Lev. ii. 1, 3, 12), an offering due from man as creature to God as Creator. Of course, it is not meant that the Levitical law was then established, or that the writer of Genesis "projected" that law into primeval history; but that this law, given to and observed by the first family, was the foundation upon which the later legislation was built, the germ around which the Hebrew religion entwined. Abel as well as Cain, according to the story, presented this meat-offering. But over and above that, Abel brought a burnt-offering, thereby confessing his sinfulness, acknowledging the just forfeiture of his life, and that forgiveness was possible only through the surrender of a substitutionary life. That these thoughts were expressed in theological terms is not of course maintained; but they were present as unformulated truths, constituting the staple of his intellectual and spiritual experience. Abel offered the fruit and the lamb: hence the use of the plural in the Epistle to the Hebrews in designating his "gifts"; and hence also his offering is said to be "fuller," completer, than that of his brother.

How came Cain to offer only of the fruit of the field, whereas Abel offered of the fruit and of the flock? Idle is it to say that each offered of that which he had. To imagine that Cain, an agriculturalist, had no sheep or cattle of his own, is absurd. Abel offered of the two kinds; so could Cain if he wished. The only rational explanation is that Cain, in the proud self-reliance of unbelief, indulged in will-worship. As the serpent persuaded his parents to disregard the Divine injunction in the Garden, so he now

persuades Cain to break through the divinely established method of drawing near to God. Unbelief issued in disobedience. Cain refused to submit to God's revealed way of saving the world, did not see the reasonableness of salvation by blood, for he was not painfully conscious of the guiltiness of sin. He went in for fruits and flowers. Culture, poetry, music were the great things of life in his estimation ; and it is a singular fact that the arts and sciences, according to this fourth chapter, had their rise, as we shall presently see, among his descendants. From the first outset, the spirit of culture presents itself in antagonism to the spirit of true religion.

Religion, however, is not hostile to culture, but inclusive of it. Abel, whilst not despising fruits and flowers, yea, is ready to give science and art their due place in the service of God, feels that the first great need of life is reconciliation, expiation, pardon ; and, exercising full trust in the Divine mercy and wisdom, draws nigh to God in the divinely instituted way. The unbelief of one led to defiance, the faith of the other to loyal, whole-hearted obedience. The radical antagonism in the heart-principles manifested itself in the character of their observance of the rites of public worship. Let no one imagine that Christian believers are opposed to the highest culture ; on the other hand, we welcome and encourage it : we only oppose it as a substitute for religion. As the embellishment of life we hail it ; as the foundation of character we repudiate it. Life must rest on piety, and piety is founded in sacrifice.

III. In exact conformity with their personal character as manifested in their public worship was God's

treatment of them in return : "God had respect unto Abel and to his offering ; but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect." "Abel received testimony that he was righteous, because God bare witness to his gifts."

Picture the scene. At the appointed time, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and possibly the other children and grandchildren, assemble together to worship, to the east of Eden, in front of the Cherubim and the Flame of Fire. Cain and Abel are the officiating priests, as heads probably of their respective clans. Cain offers of the fruit of the field ; Abel places on the altar, in addition to the fruit of the field, the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. The congregation looks on in reverent awe. "And the Lord looked keenly at Abel and at his offering ; but at Cain and his offering He did not look." What can the meaning be? Many answers have been given, of which two deserve special mention.

The first is that, as God continued to hold intercourse with men by visible appearances in human form, as intimated by His conversation with Cain in the succeeding paragraph, He now came out of the invisible, and by some well-known token, perhaps in human language, signified His acceptance of the one, and His rejection of the other. But the second seems to me most in accord with the teaching of Holy Writ, to wit, that God answered by fire. That was the usual way in later times in which God signified His satisfaction : "And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat, which, when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces"

(Lev. ix. 24). It may be objected that that was subsequent to the promulgation of the Mosaic law. But as Moses was writing for Hebrews, who understood this language in a particular sense, it is not probable he would use it in a different sense in the first narratives. Accordingly, Theodotion, the Greek translator of the second century, translates it boldly *ἐνεπύρισεν*—*He kindled or set on fire*. As Cain and Abel and the congregation were waiting in rapt expectancy, the Flame of Fire was seen to move uneasily about, growing redder and brighter, till presently a flash of lightning shot forth and consumed the offering of Abel, whilst that of Cain was left unsinged. Abel is accepted, Cain rejected. There and then, in the presence of the congregation, “Abel obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying to his gifts.” The exposition that the witness Abel received, and after him Enoch, refers to posthumous testimony by Scriptural writers, though advanced by scholars of renown, I cannot but consider shallow in the extreme. The Bible expressly states that *they* obtained the testimony; the modern exposition that *we* receive it, not they. What comfort would that be to them?

I prefer the view that Abel himself, by the Divine token of the acceptance of his sacrifice, obtained witness that he was righteous, an inward assurance that he was reconciled to God, the truth which in Christian theology is known as assurance of personal justification. “He obtained witness that he was righteous.” That he was holy? No; he was not holy yet, but he knew he was righteous. This is the mystery of the way of salvation, that a man

may be justified before he is sanctified, that he may be made perfectly righteous before he is made perfectly holy. Did we see Abel in the service that Sabbath morning, peace like a river filled his soul, serene contentment sat on his countenance, unspeakable joy beamed out of his eyes. On his way home there was greater elasticity in his step, more lightness in his tread, hardly did the daisies bow their heads under the sole of his feet—he had obtained assurance that the malediction of sin had passed away from his person for ever!

This assurance which Abel enjoyed ought to be a permanent fact in the experience of all believers. This should not be an exception, but the rule of the religious life—the assurance that, having believed, we shall not fall under condemnation. Do Christians now obtain this infallible testimony? I do not ask if we are perfectly holy, but I do ask if we are perfectly righteous. How can we attain this assurance? In the same way as Abel obtained it—by exercising faith in God through sacrifice. His offering was only a type, but he had a large, half-seeing, half-blind trust that the true sacrifice would be offered; and his faith laid hold, not of the little lamb from his own flock, but on another Lamb, a Lamb which God had reared on His own farm, “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”—slain, not only in God’s, but also in man’s estimation. God, by accepting his gifts, testified to the righteousness of his person. How may men now obtain assurance of salvation? By clearly apprehending that God has accepted our sacrifice, even Jesus Christ. His offering of Himself received the Divine

approval ; the fire descended and devoured the sacrifice. Devoured the sacrifice? Nay, rather the sacrifice devoured the fire. The fire consumed Abel's sacrifice, and Abraham's, and Aaron's ; the sacrifices disappeared, but the fire continued to burn on and on and on. But when it fell on Calvary, instead of the fire consuming the sacrifice, the sacrifice extinguished the fire. I know of no one who has given a more striking expression to this truth than a farm labourer in Flintshire. When one of his young mistresses was dying of consumption, the mother asked the servant to administer spiritual consolation to her in her great depression. Retiring to the field, placing his back against an oak, the godly servant put together a few lines of poetry, and repeated them to the evident comfort of the young saint. I venture to append a translation :

The sky above my head
 Was turned to darkest night,
 Nor sun nor moon nor stars
 Could shed a ray of light ;
 And Justice stern, 'mid thunders loud,
 Was shooting lightnings from the cloud.

My guilty conscience woke,
 It filled my soul with dread ;
 Its voice I'll ne'er forget
 Whilst on the earth I tread ;
 In anguish sore away I fled,
 Not knowing where to hide my head.

I turned me to the law
 In hope there rest to find,
 I asked in accents low
 For calm and peace of mind ;

Escape, said she, away—oh! flee
For very life to Calvary.

'Mid thunders loud and long
With all my might I sped;
Around me lightnings played
Like soldiers scarlet-red;
I reached the Mount, both faint and sad,
And saw the Saviour crimson-clad.

Although my flesh be grass,
And all my bones but clay,
'Mid lightnings red I sing—
God washed my sins away;
The Rock upholds me in the flood,
The lightnings die in Jesu's blood!

On Cain, however, the service had a contrary effect : “Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.” When anger is nursed in the breast, it cannot be concealed in the face; the scowl and darkened visage indicate the inward tumult. Then follows the interview between Jehovah and Cain. How are we to understand it? As an embodiment in language of the conflicting thoughts which were contending for the mastery in the heart of the elder brother? Scarcely, for the train and the quality of the thoughts are such as would not rise spontaneously in the breast of an angry man. Hence the inference that God, appearing to Cain, expostulated kindly, patiently with him. Marvellous the solicitude of God respecting the first family! Wonderful the condescension which prompted Him to talk to them as a man talketh to a friend, striving to guide their feet in the paths of peace. “Jehovah said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth, and why is thy

countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted or have the excellency? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." So archaic and elliptical is this language that commentators are driven hard to fix on the right meaning.

Three interpretations have been advanced and ably supported. The first is that Cain, being the elder, had the right of primogeniture, a right undefined, but evidently founded on a law of nature. Yet Abel, by his loving, placid disposition, had probably supplanted him in the affections of his parents. Now it was made clear that Abel was also the favourite of Heaven. "And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." The Creator thereupon, in His infinite benignity, condescended to reason with this moody, wayward man: Why art thou wroth? If thou doest well, if thou believest the revelation I have made of a promised Deliverer, and in attestation of thy faith bringest the prescribed offerings, thou also shalt be accepted of Me, and thou shalt have the excellency, the pre-eminence over thy brother, thou shalt enjoy the rights of primogeniture, and as the first-born thou shalt rule over him. But that God should thus argue about birthrights does not seem to me worthy of the solemnity of the occasion, or befitting the dignity of the Speaker.

The second is an advance on the first, and concerns itself about moral character, not natural rights: Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? Do well, and the consciousness of uprightness in the inward parts will illumine thy countenance, drive

away the dark frown, and cause thee to look up joyously. But if thou doest not well, if thou transgressest, and yet declinest to bring a sacrifice of blood to expiate thy guilt according to the revelation I have made of My will, sin lieth at the door—at thy door, not Mine; thou alone art responsible for thy rejection. Sin like a coiled serpent croucheth at the door of thy heart, craving for mastery over thee; but beware that thou yieldest not to the temptation—instead of sin ruling over thee, rule thou over it. Thus God mercifully warns Cain to nip his envy in the bud, for, if cherished, it would assuredly obtain dominion over him; and once envy, cruel as the grave, would get the rulership, it might drive him to murder and all atrocities. How His Spirit wrestled with this moody, choleric man to check him in his downward career!

The third interpretation, whilst not excluding the second, concerns itself about the acceptance by Cain of the revealed way of salvation. The word employed for sin (*chattath*) is the technical term in the Pentateuch for sin-offering: “If thou doest not well a sin-offering lieth at the door or gate of Paradise, where are the Cherubim and the Flame of Fire; submit to My revealed will, and offer thy sin-offering, and thou wilt obtain My approval.” Either of these interpretations yields a good sense; but the last appears to me to coalesce best with the drift and current of Scriptural theology, for it must be always borne in mind that public worship, not private religion, is the theme of the Old Testament—public worship, to be sure, as an infallible index of private morality.

But Cain would not be mollified: "And Cain talked with Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." How horrible! Cain, the firstborn child of humanity, a fratricide! How awfully must have burnt his ire! How ungovernable must have been his passion! He imbued his hands in his own brother's blood. How came he to do it? St. John answers: "He was of the wicked one." The devil wrought ruin and disaster to our first parents in the Garden; he is now working havoc among their children. Tell me that there is no devil, that human nature is alone responsible for all the atrocious deeds and dark villainies of history, and I utterly despair of its salvation. But tell me that there is a devil behind, a fiendish spirit as the prime instigator of the horrors and massacres, and I feel a load lifted from my heart—humanity is not quite so bad as I thought, I have yet hope of its ultimate reclamation by the help of Grace Divine.

Jewish tradition says that Cain, seeing a crow, having killed another, dig a hole in the ground to bury its victim, took the hint, excavated a grave—the first human grave opened on the earth—and interred the bloody corpse of his brother, in the hope of concealing his own more gory sin! As if Cain had not as much brain as a rook! Having thus disposed of his brother, he directed his steps homeward, and, passing on his way one of the four rivers which watered Eden, bathed in its cooling waters, laved his throbbing temples, washed away the bloodstains from off his hands. But nay, human

blood will not wash. The stain remains, says folklore, on the oaken floor where it fell.

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.¹

To that primeval home the shades of night came, but no Abel. Her maternal instincts fearing evil had befallen her favoured son, Eve did not rest. Early the following morning the other sons and daughters were organised into search-parties; but their explorations were without success. Indescribable was the agony and bewilderment in that first home at the first break in the family circle.

The Sabbath came round again, and even the mysterious disappearance of Abel must not interrupt the rites of religion. So the large family assembled as usual to the east of Eden, in front of the Cherubim and the Flame of Fire. As the service was proceeding, God out of the Flame addressed Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" This colloquy was not in private, else there would have been none to report it. "And Cain said, I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" Do you not hear the serpent's hiss? "And God said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." The murder is out, the criminal is detected. Cain, quaking in every limb, cries out in anguish of soul, "My sin is greater than can be forgiven! My punishment is greater than I can bear! Behold, Thou hast driven me out from

¹ *Macbeth*, Act ii., scene 2.

the face of the earth, and from Thy face I shall be hid ; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth ; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me." "And Jehovah said unto Cain, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And Jehovah set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him." What this mark was has much exercised the ingenuity of commentators. Some suppose it was a mark visible to Cain, but invisible to others. Were that the case, what was the good of it? I feel, therefore, constrained to adopt the conclusion that it was a mark, as of the beast, on his forehead or countenance—a mark which loudly proclaimed to all who saw him that he was accursed of God ; but because he was in the hands of the Almighty, men dared not take vengeance into their own.

Thereupon "he went out from the presence of the Lord"—not from the Lord, but from His Presence, that Flame of Fire which turned every way. Away he travelled from the Flame which had beheld his murder and discovered his evil deed. Away, away into the land of Nod, accompanied by his faithful wife and children, he wandered, with dishevelled hair and haggard looks, the crime of murder weighing heavily on his conscience. "Hark ! the voice ! the voice of thy brother's blood crying unto Me from the ground." To this deep, never-dying truth Æschylus gives a terrible, appalling expression in one of his plays : the Furies relentlessly pursue the murderer, and are not satisfied till they quench their thirst in his blood.

There is a law that blood, once poured on earth
By murderous hands, demands that other blood
Be shed in retribution. From the slain
Erinnys calls aloud for vengeance still,
Till death in justice meet be paid for death.

But from this terrific savageness, the relentless fury of Greek sentiment, Holy Writ is free. What is revenge among the Greeks is only vengeance among the Hebrews—a distinction which redounds greatly to the credit of the people of revelation.

“The voice of thy brother’s bloods [plural] cries unto Me from the ground.” Cain had inflicted on his brother more wounds than one; in his anger he had hacked away at the body; and from each gash the trickling blood cried to heaven for vengeance. Oh, the eloquence of blood! Mark Antony, in his oration over the dead Cæsar, begins by saying that the “wounds of Cæsar like dumb mouths did ope their ruby lips to beg the voice and utterance of his tongue”; but finishes by asking the wounds to speak for him: “I show you sweet Cæsar’s wounds, poor, poor dumb mouths, and bid them speak for me.” Then he showed the crowd Cæsar’s vesture punctured by the traitors’ daggers, and that moved them to pity. He afterwards showed them Cæsar’s body, all marred and gashed, and the sight of blood drove them to rise and mutiny. But why all this tumult and commotion? It is blood that is speaking. “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground. Cursed therefore art thou from the face of the earth.” We, however, know of another blood—“the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

Abel's blood cried that justice might prevail on the earth; Christ's blood cries that mercy may triumph over judgment. The blood of Abel besought vengeance on the murderer; the blood of Christ beseeches pardon, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

CHAPTER XIII

ANTEDILUVIANS : DEVELOPMENT OF EVIL

FROM Adam down to the Deluge human life extended from eight hundred to one thousand years. The accuracy of these figures has often been challenged. Many modifications, based principally on the supposed variable signification of the term "year," have been offered, but none have proved satisfactory. The Genesis account is moreover corroborated by the traditions of other nations, which recall a golden age when men enjoyed lives of extraordinary length. This longevity the Hebrew prophets in after-times converted into a metaphor, with which to paint the future felicity and prosperity of Messiah's reign.

I therefore provisionally accept these brief memoirs as true in fact and figure. What were the causes at work to secure for the ancients such long immunity from death baffles inquiry. Sufficient reason cannot be found in the nature of man or his environments, or in both together. The reason is not in Nature, but in Providence ; for longevity was favourable to the transmission of truth, when book-making was not a trade, Methuselah was a contemporary for two

hundred and fifty years with Adam; and, dwelling in the same region, doubtless saw him, and heard probably from his lips the story of Eden and the Fall. Methuselah would hand it down carefully to his grandson Noah, who again would repeat it to the generations succeeding the Flood. The tradition could thus be preserved in comparative purity down to the days of Moses. Longevity was thus favourable to the transmission of historic truth and highly advantageous to the advancement of learning and civilisation; but when writing became prevalent no special reason existed for the prolongation of life.

But if long life favoured the preservation of true religion, it also helped forward the propagation of vice. The ages of the descendants of Cain are not given, for, from a redemption point of view, they were of no consequence; but doubtless they ran parallel with those of the pious line of Seth. Just imagine the notorious filibusters of the Norman Conquest living in the Vale of Glamorgan, where so many of them settled, down to the present day—eight hundred years; how they would oppress men, corrupt society, and convert the land into a menageric. That, however, was the case before the Flood. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." In mercy to men themselves God gradually shortened their lives. Better for hardened criminals to die at eighty than live to eight hundred. When they lived long, what a bedlam men made of the world!

But all that is myth, remark the critics. Let us then examine it more narrowly. According to

Genesis, the number of generations from the Creation to the Flood is Ten, including that of Noah. "Now it is a significant fact," writes Mr. Urquhart, "that this very number ten reappears with most remarkable persistency in the ancient traditions of the various races. The Egyptians believed that ten deities reigned before man. The Sybelline books speak of ten ages which elapsed between the Creation and the Deluge. The Iranians looked back to their ten *Peischaddin*, or monarchs, 'the men of the ancient law,' who drank of the pure *homa*, the drink of the immortals, and who watched over holiness. The Hindoos speak of the nine *Brahmidikas*, who with Brahma, their maker, are called the ten *Pitris*, or fathers. The Germans and the Scandinavians tell of the ten ancestors of Odin; the Chinese of the ten Emperors, who shared the Divine nature, and reigned before the dawn of historic times; the Arabs of the ten kings of the *Adites*, primitive inhabitants of the Peninsula embraced between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The Phœnician historian, Sacchoniathon, also gives ten generations of Primitive Patriarchs."¹

"We find ourselves," says Lenormant, "confronted with an imposing array of concordant testimony, gathered in from the four quarters of the earth, which leaves no room for doubt in regard to the common ground of the ancient narratives, touching the principal days of man among all the great civilised nations of the old world. The agreement as to the number of antediluvian patriarchs, with the Bible

¹ Rev. John Urquhart, *The Bible and Modern Discoveries*, p. 158.

statement, in the traditions of nations—most diverse one from another—is manifested in a striking way. They are ten in the story of Genesis, and with a strange persistence this number ten is reproduced in the legends of a very great number of nations, when dealing with their primitive ancestors, yet shrouded in the midst of fable. To whatever epoch they trace back these ancestors, whether before or after the Deluge, whether the mythic or historic side predominate in their physiognomy, they invariably offer this sacramental number ten.”¹

How came all these nations to fix on Ten as the number of the Primitive Patriarchs? To say that the stories are myths leaves the problem unsolved. The question is, How came all the myths to fix on the same number, and that number correspondent to the number in Genesis? Does not this singular agreement point to the one central historic fact, out of which all the myths sprang, that the Mosaic record is correct in its presentation of the Ten antediluvian Patriarchs? The Genesis record explains the myths, whereas, on any other hypothesis, they remain utterly inexplicable.

I. Let us direct our attention to the Cainite family.

Departing from the Eden district, where God vouchsafed visible symbols of His presence, accompanied by his family, Cain migrated eastward to unexplored and uninhabited regions, hoping to escape the bitter memories of his horrid deed, and to earn a scanty living from the doubly accursed

¹ *The Beginnings of History*, pp. 218, 219.

soil. But wherever he roamed, conscience gave him no peace—

With crimson clouds before his eyes,
 And flames about his brain,
 For blood had left upon his soul
 Its everlasting stain.¹

Gradually the burden grew lighter. The fear of imminent judgment having been allayed, the remembrance of the murder grew fainter, the conscience waxed harder, and Cain devoted himself to the steady, obdurate pursuit of his worldly avocation. The years passed. He never once presented himself in the ancestral sanctuary. His family, fast increasing, developed into a powerful clan; and Cain settled down into stolid indifference to all spiritual interests. Of indomitable energy and endless resources, battling valiantly against his doom, he subjugated the forces of nature, and established a thriving community.

In reviewing briefly the progress made in antediluvian times, be it remembered that men lived on the earth nearly one thousand years, and that therefore they had powerful incentives to hard and continuous work; and that, having made an invention, they lived long enough to supervise and direct all improvements, the experience of centuries of personal study and observation being at their command. Suppose Faraday, Newton, and Watt were allowed one thousand years to continue their experiments and calculations, what rapid progress, what long strides, science would make! This advantage the thinkers

¹ Thomas Hood, *Eugene Aram*.

of the old world abundantly enjoyed. Be it further remembered that all spoke one language, so that the exchange of ideas was easy, and some clue will be afforded to the rapid advance of the arts and sciences in their times.

The Cainite family are credited in the fourth chapter of Genesis with the honour of being the initiators of civilisation, in its material aspect. By civilisation in its profoundest sense is understood a condition of existence opposed to savagery; not necessarily acquaintance with and deftness in mechanical crafts, but calm, quiet thoughtfulness, self-control, consciousness of obligation to a higher law, and an honest endeavour to discharge social duties. Were I transferred to the richest auriferous region in the world, I would feel myself utterly helpless. Having never been a miner, I know not the best way of blasting rocks. Having never been a gold-digger, I am ignorant of the best method of extracting gold from the quartz. Yet were I pronounced less civilised than the navvies of the Australian bush, I should have just cause for resentment. Consider civilisation on its moral side, and to the posterity of Seth, doubtless, belonged the superiority. But in efforts to subdue nature, to adorn temporal existence, the Bible, with strict impartiality, ascribes the precedence to the godless descendants of Cain. Voluntarily depriving themselves of cult, they devoted themselves to culture. Expecting no blessing from heaven, they extracted all they could from the earth.

Assisted by his children, Cain "began to build a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch." Here we behold the birth of

architecture. Men, doubtless, dwelt in houses before ; but this is the first sustained effort to construct a town and institute municipal government. The attempt may not have resulted in the erection of palatial residences ; on the other hand, there is no reason for the description often given that it was only an aggregation of wigwams, like African villages, protected by wooden palisades or a hedge of prickly hawthorns. If primitive men were only emerging from barbarism, this representation of their first essay at architecture might be true. But the assumption of the Bible all along is, that men began in a state of civilisation, so far as the mental and moral faculties are concerned. Though a wicked man, Cain was richly dowered intellectually ; and the Edenic civilisation he had received from his parents, he imparted to his descendants, improved and adapted to their new requirements.

There is every reason to believe that this Cainite city was more than an assemblage of ill-constructed hovels, that here we have an able, long-sustained effort to construct a regular town : not with the view, as some commentators allege, of converting it into a fortification, to enable Cain to resist successfully the onsets of his enemies, the fear of personal violence for the murder of his brother having long ago vanished ; but rather to improve the material conditions of life, to multiply its comforts by association, whilst not wholly oblivious of the subordinate object of warding off possible attacks by hostile tribes. That the structures were simple in their plan, and antique in their appearance, cannot be controverted ; but as the builders lived long, experience soon came

to their aid. Mechanical skill must have arrived at a comparatively advanced stage to enable Noah to build the ark of gopher wood. Take any chance company of ministers or scholars, brought up in an enlightened country, and not totally unobservant of the ways of men; yet it may be doubted if all of them combined can unravel the specifications of the ark and construct a ship in accordance therewith. Cain "began" to build; the work progressed through the centuries; the town became recognised as the capital of the district, having probably for its governor its founder and the natural head of the tribe. Underneath the ancient city of Nipur, in Southern Babylonia, have been discovered the remains of a more ancient city still, covered with a huge deposit of mud and sand, which, it is averred, could have proceeded neither from the Euphrates nor the Tigris, and which it is suspected is antediluvian. Further excavations may give us clearer ideas of the architecture, and the civilisation generally, of the world before the Flood.

In Genesis the murder of Abel and the building of the city named Enoch are closely connected, the former being the occasion of the latter. Lenormant, with vast erudition, has shown that, in the mythologies of the world, the institution of famous cities is always associated with murder. His views are well summarised by Mr. Urquhart in the following extract: "The walls of the city," of which Sargon was the builder, "were, so to say, laid in blood. These indications are explained and emphasised by the traditions of all nations. The legend meets us in the story of Romulus and Remus. The two

brothers quarrelled *because of the omens granted by the gods*—a reminder of the token by which God showed His acceptance of Abel but His rejection of Cain. “The birds *appeared first to Remus*, and he claimed that his site should be chosen for the city. But Romulus *afterwards* had an omen, which he contended showed that his site was approved. They had a subsequent meeting, as Romulus was building, and then the pent-up wrath flamed out. Remus was slain, and Romulus built his city with hands stained with his brother’s blood. The story meets us everywhere. Each famous city, of the origin of which the legends speak, has human blood poured into its trenches. Murder and city-building are bound together. The city-builder is stained with this blackest of crimes. The stones of his city walls are laid in the blood of one whose life ought to have been to him among the most sacred which the earth contained. There is no apparent connection between city-building and brother-slaying. What, then, has made the nations link these so closely together? The Scripture supplies an explanation, which brings us out of myth into the sobriety and the light of history. Put that narrative aside, and there is nothing in the whole world’s literature to make known to us what all those signs and tales are striving to say. Accept it as history, and the mystery is solved.”

A brief account follows of the origination of other arts. Special attention is directed to the family of Lamech, for to the genius characteristic of his family are attributed several inventions of importance. “And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents and of such as have cattle.” Jabal

found it to his advantage to move his cattle from place to place, following the pasturage, and for convenience, abandoning towns, he dwelt in tents. He was the initiator of the nomadic life—a statement which goes to prove that at the first men lived in communities. The mention of tents suggests another branch of industry, upon which tents are dependent—the art of weaving. No doubt the skins of animals, properly tanned, made efficient coverings; but it is incredible that mankind, displaying so much ingenuity in other directions, should remain ignorant of the simple art of weaving the wool of sheep and the hair of goats into much-needed cloth. Tradition ascribes the invention of the distaff and the weaving art to Naamah, the daughter of this family, whose name is here mentioned as well known.

Then follows the art of music: “And his brother’s name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ,” or, according to Luther’s translation, “the father of all fiddlers and pipers.” This presupposes the previous discovery of the octave. Jubal made musical science an especial study; he is credited with the invention of the harp and organ, thus occupying the same place in Hebrew theology as Apollo in Greek mythology. Not of course the harp and organ in their perfected state, but in their first rudiments, representing respectively stringed and wind instruments—the harp resembling the ancient lyre, and the organ the ancient Pandæan pipe. This would be about seven or eight hundred years after the Fall, so that James Montgomery’s fancy that Cain heard the music and felt tranquillised and soothed is not entirely without foundation,

though the ground idea of the poem that he was a maniac, of haggard appearance and wild demeanour, is distinctly contradicted by the direct statements of this chapter. Living in communities, the antediluvians cultivated the fine arts; the fair sex began to exert their refining influence, and special mention is made of Adah, the adorned, of Zillah, the musical player, and of Naamah, the beautiful. Instrumental music was in vogue; and instrumental music always follows, never precedes, vocal music. Does not the sobriquet of Zillah suggest that she accompanied the harp with her voice?

Another son of Lamech was Tubal-Cain, "an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron": not the discoverer of metals and the first to apply them to practical purposes, but one who made memorable improvements in their manufacture. Metallurgy was neither unknown nor neglected. The metals were extracted from the stone, smelted in furnaces, forged into industrial machinery and weapons of war. Of all the primeval smiths, Tubal-Cain (Vulcan) was the most celebrated. Thus a large industry was established in copper, brass, and iron; and the ancients, it is believed, had a method of hardening copper, the secret of which has not yet been discovered by our much-vaunted modern science. Notwithstanding the brevity of the notices, enough is said to show that the antediluvians were a mighty people, muscularly strong, intellectually powerful, and artistically trained. As with Pompeii and other ancient cities, I doubt not but that the high state of civilisation to which the antediluvians had attained would fill the modern mind with admiration,

even as their indescribable degradation in morality shocks the modern conscience. Only the sins of civilised nations could loudly clamour for the destruction of the world.

Music, however, cannot be much developed without the aid of her twin-sister poetry. The historian could not give us plans of the architecture of the ancient world—the buildings had all been demolished by the Deluge. He could not give us specimens of their harps and organs—they were made of perishable materials and had rotted before his time. But the preservation of poetry depends upon memory, and therefore he is able to give us an example of the ancient *ars poetica*. The poet is Lamech; his effusion is known as the Song of the Sword.

Lamech said unto his wives :

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice ;
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech :
For I have slain a man to my wounding,
And a young man to my hurt.
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

It is the oldest piece of poetry extant, the only specimen of antediluvian literature that has come down to our day. How was it preserved? Tradition answers that, in the intermarriages between the Sethites and the Cainites, "the sons of God and the daughters of men," Ham took Naamah, Lamech's daughter, to wife; and that, through her, her father's composition passed over into the new world. But, apart from that, the Song doubtless became celebrated. It is just the kind of song that strikes the popular imagination, full of sound and fury, marked

by swagger and the military spirit. Such a song would inevitably reach the family of Noah, and, committed to memory, find its way into the new age. Indeed, there is no reason for disbelieving that writing was an antediluvian accomplishment; the difficulty is all on the other side. On any other hypothesis, how to account for the preservation of the antediluvian registers? Men so richly dowered intellectually, advancing rapidly in knowledge, cultivating the fine arts, fashioning timber and working in metals, were not likely to be unable to devise an alphabet or invent hieroglyphics, by means of which they could leave memorials behind them or exchange ideas with one another.

Be that as it may, Lamech's Song has been preserved, and in it we see the characteristic feature of Hebrew poetry—strophic parallelism. This, I know, creates a new difficulty—Did Lamech compose in Hebrew? But the presence of the unknown should not blind our eyes to that which is clear.

The chief significance of the Song consists in the lurid light it sheds on the moral condition of the Cainite family. Lamech had two wives. Monogamy was the sacred law of primeval life, and was probably scrupulously observed for centuries after the Fall. At last, the unbridled lusts of men broke through all restraints; and in Lamech's Song polygamy is an accomplished fact, publicly avowed, and, as usual, carries in its train jealousies, heart-burnings, conspiracies, murders. It further shows that, contemporaneous with the development of the fine arts, society was lapsing into a state of disorganisation, lawlessness, and violence. Wars,

private and public, were being waged: hence the manufacture of the dagger and the sword, and the rollicking glee with which their invention was hailed. So proud was Lamech of the possession of weapons of war that his fierce enthusiasm burst forth in a war-song.

Studious they appear
Of arts that polish life,—inventors rare—
Unmindful of their Maker, though His Spirit
Taught them; but they His gifts acknowledge none.¹

What then is the meaning of the Song? The traditional interpretation is, that Lamech in it celebrates his own prowess in slaying two men, an adult and a youth. If this be true, it exhibits the growth of insolent sin in society. Cain, the first on the register, slew a man, and was horrified—so horrified that he and his family fled into a land of isolation. Lamech, the last in the series, slays two men. But, instead of being dismayed, he glories in his valour, and makes his murderous hate a subject of encomium; and when murder is eulogised in poetry, it proves that society is sunk into unfathomable depths in moral callousness and vice.

This exposition, however, is questioned, and that on good grounds. "The Song of the Sword, which gives expression to the excitement attending the first invention of deadly weapons, contains the following couplet:

I have slain a man to my wounding,
And a young man to my hurt.

Does this passage imply the slaying of one person

¹ Milton, *Paradise Lost*.

or two persons? This question cannot be called a mere matter of technicalities. Commentators of the period, when the secret of parallelism was lost, understood the words to mean that two men were slain; and connecting the passage with the succeeding couplet,

If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold,

they found an interpretation for the whole by supposing that, when Lamech became advanced in years, he carried with him a youth to show him where to point his arrows; that this youth directing him to shoot into a certain bush, Lamech thereby slew Cain, and made himself liable to the curse invoked on the slayer of that outcast. In his rage Lamech shot a second arrow at his youthful attendant; and thus two slayings are accounted for. But to an ear accustomed to parallelism it is clear enough that no such violence of interpretation is required. The second line of a couplet need not be a separate statement from that of the first line, but may be, in the spirit of parallelism, a saying over again of what has been said. Thus the couplet needs only imply the death of a single person, or, better, slaying as a general idea. Thus the whole meaning of the passage has been changed by attention to a detail of versification."¹

In accordance with the idea of general slaying, the majority of modern commentators view the Song as hypothetical, in which Lamech in fierce self-reliance boasts beforehand what he would do should certain

¹ Moulton, *Literary Study of the Bible*, pp. 68, 69.

contingencies arise. But whichever interpretation we adopt, the venom of the serpent is seen inflaming the passions of men.

II. In the Genesis narrative no discovery in the physical world is attributed to the godly line of Seth, no invention is put down to their credit. This feature is in harmony with post-diluvian history : to the Gentiles belonged the arts and sciences, only ethics and revelation to the people of God.

Josephus, however, records the tradition that Seth attained celebrity as an astronomer ; and the " columns of Seth," on which he was reported to have inscribed his observations of the celestial bodies, have found a permanent place in literature. Enoch also is affirmed to have devoted much attention to astronomy. His fame, under the name of Idris, was carried to the West by the Celtic nations ; and in his honour one of the noblest Welsh mountains is named Cader Idris, the Chair of Idris, because on the top of it, Enoch, the star-gazer as well as the saint, was supposed to have sat to carry on his observations. These traditions show that the ethnic nations gradually gave a physical turn to the spiritual fact of their fellowship with God. Their communion with heaven was construed to mean the study of the heavenly bodies.

These floating traditions are mentioned to show to better advantage the holy reserve, the balanced sobriety, which always and everywhere pervade Holy Writ. According to Genesis, the Sethites became remarkable for the simple reason that through them the Divine promise of redemption was flowing on towards its fulfilment in the future Seed, and that

by them true worship was perpetuated. Intellectual greatness belonged to the family of Cain; to the family of Seth belonged, not mental, but moral greatness. Given intellectual greatness and moral greatness, which do you think superior? Young people, I fear, would give the preference to greatness of intellect, and I am not sure but that there was a time when I would have made the same selection. Since then, however, I see things in a different light—the man or the nation who has a genius for goodness stands higher in my estimation now than the man or the nation who has a genius for learning. The devil is a genius in intellect, but God is a genius in goodness. “Show me Thy *glory*,” prayed Moses. “I will make My *goodness* pass before thee,” answered God. God’s glory consists in His goodness, His greatness lies in His character. Judged by this standard, who are the worthier of respect and admiration—the Cainites or the Sethites, the men of intellect or the men of character?

In the days of Enos, Seth’s son, “began men to call upon the name of the Lord”—a statement which has occasioned considerable differences of opinion. The difficulty, however, is chiefly linguistic. Some translate: “Then men began to profane the name of the Lord.” That is, in the days of Enos idolatry commenced, then men began to carve graven images of the Unseen. This rendering does not seem to harmonise well with the drift and import of the passage. Preference should therefore be given to the double rendering in the Authorised Version, for the marginal reading and that in the body of the verse involve each other: “Then men began to call

upon the name of the Lord"; "then men began to call themselves by the name of the Lord." Delitzsch translates the word "declare" or "proclaim." The import seems to be that now public prayers and oral addresses were introduced into the public worship of Jehovah. Whereas previously the service was confined to the offering of sacrifices and the confession of sin, in the days of Enos prayer, instruction, and exhortation were added—the germs of prophecy, the first beginnings of preaching. The population was now fast increasing, and to keep the new generations from lapsing into crass ignorance in regard to spiritual religion, some settled method of instruction was absolutely required. Out of this sprang the other fact, that men began to call themselves by the name of Jehovah. In the promiscuous condition of society the religious men in the line of Seth separated themselves, not locally but spiritually, from the impious and profane. As the disciples of Christ became soon known as Christians, so true worshippers now became known as "sons of God" in contradistinction from the "children of men." But be the precise meaning what it may, one thing stands out conspicuously—that in the days of Enos there broke out a great revival of true religion, worshippers of Jehovah became more pronounced and courageous, the service of God received a sensible lift and arrested public attention.

Thereafter the true religion flowed placidly on for centuries, till, about the year 900, the middle epoch between the Fall and the Flood, it culminated in the life, character, and ministry of Enoch. Of this remarkable man the affirmation is twice made that

he "walked with God"—a peculiarity of phrasology repeated but once again in the whole Bible, in connection with Noah. Abraham is commanded to "walk *before* God," the Israelites to "walk *after* God"; of Enoch and Noah only is the assertion made that they "walked *with* God." Is this variation of phrase accidental, or does it convey a peculiarly specific meaning? From it the conclusion has been drawn that the Divine theophanies were continued to the antediluvian saints, so that their lack of a fuller revelation might to some extent be compensated by the occasional visible presence of God in their midst. For three hundred years Enoch walked not only before God, but *with* Him, in intimate personal fellowship. These long years of close communion with God were not spent in solitary meditation, for the New Testament gives us to understand that, like his grandson Noah, he also was a "preacher of righteousness." Indeed, is it not the correct view that all these Sethite patriarchs, whose names are here given, were preachers, prophets, public functionaries, so that Enoch was the "seventh" preacher or prophet from Adam?

With regard to Enoch the testimony of the Apostle Jude is emphatic: "Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" (vers. 14, 15). According to most moderns, Jude derived this information from the

Book of Enoch, to which reference is often made by the Christian Fathers, but which became lost, and was only recovered this century in an Ethiopic translation. Its authorship was ascribed to the antediluvian prophet, and it breathes throughout a high spirituality. Scholars are generally agreed that it is the composition of a devout Jew, living between the time of Malachi and the First Advent. The book was known to Jude, who makes from it the above quotation. Or it is quite possible that Jude incorporated it from Jewish tradition. Either way it makes no practical difference, for it is just as consonant with the inspiration of the Apostle to cite from an uninspired book as from an uninspired tradition. St. Paul quotes from uninspired Greek writers; why not St. Jude from an uninspired Hebrew writer? Its insertion by St. Jude as a veritable prophecy of Enoch guarantees to Christian believers, though not to Christian critics, its historic veracity. Not content with enjoying personal fellowship with God, Enoch bore public testimony to Him, and proclaimed to an ungodly race the sure coming of judgment. The doctrine of the Day of Judgment was, therefore, a doctrine of the Church before the Flood.

The prophecy is Enoch's ministry condensed, the pith and burden of his preaching. Like Whitefield in modern days, he itinerated the country, threatening the judgment of the Almighty on all workers of iniquity. Like John Wesley, he frequented the markets and fairs, and, his heart all aflame with holy zeal, denounced dishonesty, violence, and illicit pleasures. He had no written revelation, and but few like-minded to encourage him in his efforts to stem

the swelling tide of iniquity. But he had probably heard Adam once and again, when the saints met for worship to the east of Eden, tell the story of the Fall ; he had heard Eve repeat, word for word, the promise of the Seed which was to crush the serpent's head ; he had learnt the tale of the murder of Abel and the subsequent exile of Cain. He had known of other revelations, and doubtless had received fresh revelations himself, if the testimony of Jude is to be taken as historic truth.

All this is not written in the Genesis narrative. But assuming human nature to have been then what it is now, is it at all improbable ? Men were social then as now, full of inquisitiveness, ever desirous to hear or to tell some new thing. As Enoch was a contemporary of Adam dwelling in the same land, attracted by religious affinities, is it not likely, nay, certain, that he would seek from him knowledge of the Fall and of the promise of Redemption ? A bold, brave, honest man, he witnessed to God and righteousness in a wicked and adulterous generation. As usual, his faithful, austere ministry excited the laughter of some, roused the ire of others. Even nominal professors of religion voted him a fanatic, considered him half-cracked. That is not down in the Book, you say. Down in the Book ! No ; for it is down in human nature, which in its essential elements is the same after as before the Deluge. Was not Daniel Rowlands, the great evangelist of Wales, called by religious people the "cracked" clergyman of Llangeitho ? Yet through the "cracks" these holy men, intoxicated with seraphic enthusiasm, saw farther into the spiritual world than their more

demure critics. Enoch's sermon, preserved by Jude, is the only specimen of the ministry of the antediluvian Church which has come down to our day. As we have one specimen of the ungodly literature of the period in Lamech's song, so have we one example of the preaching of that age in Enoch's prophecy. Either in writing or memory it was treasured by his grandson, Noah; it floated across the waters of the Deluge; it came down past the destruction of Jerusalem; and is an object of curiosity, and a subject of controversy, to the critics of the nineteenth century of the Christian era. Its chief value to us, however, consists in the dismal light it flings on the moral condition of the world at the time, midway between the Fall and the Flood. Four times in the space of a few lines it repeats the word "ungodly," twanging the same string in the ear of men till it sounds like the knell of judgment, thus showing that flagrant impurities were rife in the land. Immorality as usual led to infidelity—ungodly men spoke "hard speeches" against Him!

Another fact of moment in Enoch's history is his translation without seeing death. "He was not, for God took him," is the archaic, enigmatic information given. "He was translated without seeing death," is the apostolic commentary. His disappearance must have occasioned great sensation among his compatriots. Sudden fear must have fallen on the ungodly, strange searchings of heart must have broken the slumbers of the Church. Believers and unbelievers could not but speculate concerning his fate. Thinking he might have been dropped from the clouds, they organised exploring parties, who,

climbing the mountains, scoured the hollows and ravines. But "he was not found, *not found*, for God had translated him."

This translation of Enoch served a double purpose. First, it intimated to the men then living that death is not the end of existence. "To be or not to be?" That was the all-important question then as always. The invisible world becomes by degrees an incredible world, especially to men who walk by sight, and not by faith. Consequently, in each dispensation God has given men one palpable demonstration of the existence of a future state. Enoch's ascension in the antediluvian dispensation, Elijah's in the Jewish, and Christ's in the Christian, all proclaim loudly that another world exists. Second, it taught the immortality of man in the entirety of his nature; not the survival of the soul only, but of the body also. If the antediluvians did not know of the resurrection of the dead by a direct revelation from heaven, they could not, after the ascension of Enoch, but theorise respecting the ultimate fate of the body. Contemporary believers—and all the patriarchs here enumerated, except Adam and Noah, were then alive—deeply revolved it in their minds. Gradually the spiritual instinct within appropriated it, if not as an article of doctrine, at all events as a truth of faith.

The ancient saints are habitually represented in modern books as more ignorant of God and the spiritual world than they really were. Adam and Enoch, Noah and Abraham, were able, thoughtful men, aided in their deep thinking, as occasion required, by inspiration from above. The Book of

Genesis, so opulent in spiritual truth, is only a fragmentary summary of the profound thinking of these venerable men. Be the Book of Job the production of the Mosaic or a later age, it indicates the quality of religious thought from the beginning: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day on the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I will see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another" (Job xix. 25-27). This wonderful passage may be but the efflorescence of true religion in the after-time; but the flower would not show on the branch did the sap not circulate in the root.

From Enoch's time on, a period of another nine hundred years, immorality rapidly spread, spiritual religion as rapidly declined. In the direct lineage of Enoch true worship still survived, and with it pure morality; but the range of their influence was annually contracting. Lamech's exclamation—the Sethite Lamech—gives us a momentary glimpse into the religious condition of the Church: "He called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." These words suggest that life had become almost intolerable, that the burden of existence was well-nigh too heavy to bear, and that as a result the Church had fallen into a state of profound dejection. On the other hand, they teach that, notwithstanding the spread of godlessness, the hope of a Deliverer was yet alive, the expectation of the woman's Seed to cancel the curse of sin and to usher in an era

of plenty and peace. But whilst a faithful few still remained, the great majority even of the Sethites were overtaken by the flood of ungodliness. The unbelief and worldliness of the Cainites, their vices and immoralities, overflowed into the Church. Evil seemed to be triumphing over Good; the seed of the serpent was fast overcoming the seed of the woman. The crisis of the battle was near. The Deluge of Sin preceded the Deluge of Water, and the former was the cause and justification of the latter.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DELUGE : THE APPARENT TRIUMPH OF EVIL

IN his brilliant, self-confident manner Mr. Huxley scouts the idea of a deluge such as is described in Genesis. "It is difficult," he says, "to persuade serious scientific inquirers to occupy themselves in any way with the Noachian deluge."¹ However, scientific men of no mean repute believe that they discover traces of land subsidence in Armenia, which justifies them in accepting the Mosaic statement.

But though science has so far but little to say regarding this question, and that little it says in a hesitant, stammering fashion, the traditions of the nations, by their more than usual copiousness, compensate for this deficiency. There is not a nation, it is said, on the five continents, with the exception of the negroes, who are not rich in reminiscences concerning a great Flood.

The Chaldæan legend has been preserved by Berosus, a heathen priest, who lived three centuries before Christ. He gives an elaborate account of a mighty Flood, and the escape of Xisuthros in a ship—his sending out birds, which the last time returned with mud on their feet. Another version, substantially the same, is given us by Mr. George

¹ *Contemporary Review*, July, 1890.

Smith in his translation of the Chaldæan tablets. Samus Napisti or Xisuthros—the Biblical Noah—relates the story of the Deluge, how he was enjoined by the gods to build a ship, and how he gathered all seed and animal life into it. When he and his family had entered, and the door was shut, the tempest began. So terrible was the scene that even the gods shook with alarm. “The gods, like dogs in their kennel, crouched down in a heap.” At length the rain abated, and the winds hushed. Thereupon Samus Napisti, looking out through the window of the ark, beheld “corpses floating on the waters like reeds.” At last the ship grounded on a high mountain. The adventurous voyager sent forth a dove, which presently returned, because “a resting-place it did not find.” He next lets go a swallow, which, skimming the sky, flew away; but at length returned because it found “no resting-place.” A raven was next despatched—“he ate, he swam, he wandered away, he returned not.” The saved man and his family came out, offered a sacrifice, around which the gods, smelling the sweet savour, “gathered like flies.”

The Greek legend is told by Hesiod and Ovid, with slight variations, but practically the same. Mankind, because of their high-handed impiety, were doomed by Zeus (Jupiter) to destruction. But Deucalion, in virtue of his great piety, was warned of the coming judgment. Hence he constructed a boat in accordance with Divine instructions. Presently the Flood came, the world was overwhelmed, all mankind perished except Deucalion and Pyrrha his wife, their three sons and their three

daughters. The boat floated till it landed on Parnassus. Deucalion sent forth a dove, which before long returned. She was let loose the second time, but did not return ; or, according to another version, she alighted on the roof of the ark, with her claws stained with mud—an indication that the assuaging of the waters had commenced.

Not to occupy space in the narration of the Egyptian, Indian, and other legends, call to mind the tradition preserved in the folklore of Wales. A Welsh Triad informs us that the first master-work of the Isle of Britain was the building of a ship which carried in it a man and woman when Lake Llion (floods) burst its banks ; and the second the drawing to land of the Avangc, which brought about the disaster. Neivion, with his three sons, Hu, Tydain, and Dylan, built a ship, in which all creatures were preserved in pairs, and in which Dwywan and Dwywrach escaped the destruction which befell all mankind besides.¹

Go where we will, these traditions meet us. How to account for them? By the supposition that a Flood never took place? Then mankind are idiots, and in the fact that these legends, identical in substance, prevail everywhere, we have a miracle of lunacy. Is it not more respectful to the race, and more consonant with all that is noble and generous, to believe that they are vague recollections of an actual tragedy in the history of the world? All nations in the north and south, in the east and west, could not have entered into collusion to dream the same dream, to tell the same tale, were there not a

¹ Owen Morgan, *Light of Britannia*, p. 116.

central fact such as is vouched for in the Genesis story.

I. Of subordinate interest is the inquiry touching the extent of the Deluge.

The language employed by the historian is strong: "The waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered" (vii. 19). But assertions of similar vehemence and absoluteness in other parts of Scripture are known to have a limited signification. The phraseology receives its universal character from the intensity of feeling in the writer or first reporter of the event. The catastrophe was so solemn, appalling, and overwhelming that every faculty and emotion in Noah were strained to their highest tension. Such impressions and emotions always manifest themselves in strong rhetorical language, the speaker feeling that only superlatives can give adequate expression to the truth. Weaker language would be subjectively untrue. The description bears the stamp of subjective truthfulness; how far it presents objective truth is for the readers to decide.

Personally I see no cause to maintain the universality of the Deluge. In its interpretation the Bible always demands sobermindedness. The moral purpose of the Deluge largely determines its extent. The object was the perdition of the human race. The Flood need not, therefore, have extended beyond the area of population, which probably covered Armenia and the adjoining countries. All that the story requires us to believe is, that all mankind perished except the eight souls saved in the ark.

Whilst accepting the theory of a deluge adequate

to its purpose, a deluge of limited extent, I disclaim sympathy with the objections, and especially the spirit of the objections, often urged against the contrary view. "If the Flood extended to Australia," writes Dr. Dods, "and destroyed all animal life there, what are we compelled to suppose as the order of events? We must suppose that the creatures, visited by some presentiment of what was to happen many months after, selected specimens of their number, and that these specimens by some unknown and quite inconceivable means crossed thousands of miles of sea, found their way through all kinds of perils from unaccustomed climate, food, and beasts of prey, singled out Noah by some inscrutable instinct, and surrendered themselves into his keeping."¹ That doubtless is the way Dr. Dods would set about it—"get the animals to select specimens of their number," though the learned divine does not condescend to tell us whether it would be by ballot or by show of hands. However, the Supreme Being is not necessarily confined to Dr. Dods' method. Even if the Deluge were universal, the difficulties enumerated would not prove insuperable to the Almighty, who, when the ship was in the midst of the sea, caused it immediately to reach the shore; who caught up Philip and transported him instantly from Gaza to Samaria in a manner we know not. Such writing ignores the supernatural character of the episode, endeavours to explain it on naturalistic principles, and thereby comes very near holding up to ridicule Him who is God blessed for evermore.

To examine the Deluge as a mere physical fact

¹ *Genesis*, p. 56.

is to unduly narrow the question and improperly disengage it from its connections. The Deluge, however, is not a prodigy or an accident, but a miracle, a supernatural event, by which God executes judgment on presumptuous sin. The attempt, therefore, to explain it on natural grounds, such as a local and periodical inundation of the Tigris or Euphrates, is branded with futility. On the other hand, to essay to deny it on natural grounds is still more vain. Such inquiries as, Where could water enough be had to cover the tops of the highest mountains? overlook the fundamental character of the event. Were it a natural overflow, brought about by the action of physical forces, such queries might be in place, for Nature can only work with the stock she already possesses—she can neither add nor diminish.

But to ask where God could get so much water, and what He could have done with it when the storm was overpast, savours of atheism. God, who created the waters at the beginning, could not be at a loss how to get a few million gallons more if required, nor embarrassed where to put it when the subsidence took place, following the blowing of the wind. Be it firmly gasped that the Deluge was a supernatural event, having its cause, not in the physical, but in the moral world. That God employed secondary means, physical laws, to accomplish His end is not denied; but these laws, left to pursue their accustomed course, would not produce the Deluge—at the time, in the manner, and to the extent indicated. God let them loose; hence the tragic calamity. "It might apparently be argued," writes Dr. Dods, "that it [the Deluge] could not have spread to the sea-

coast, or that at any rate no ships had as yet been built large enough to weather a severe storm ; for a thoroughly nautical population could have had little difficulty in surviving such a catastrophe as is here described." Little difficulty? Did the Deluge come on now, picture Dr. Dods and a crew of brave Scots manning a Clyde boat to dodge the Almighty to drown them! Such writing is out of harmony with the solemn tone of the sacred narrative, and mistakes both the moral purpose and the supernatural character of the event.

II. Properly to apprehend the Biblical account of the Deluge, it should be contemplated from a moral, not a physical standpoint.

From the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Revelation ethics govern physics. So long as man rendered obedience to his Maker, the earth smiled in abundance upon its cultivators. When man sinned, the curse of barrenness fell upon the soil. In prophecy also we find that ethics always govern physics. Lax morality is always followed by agricultural sterility, by famine, by pestilence ; on the contrary, godliness in a nation guarantees fulness of bread. Devotedness to the worship of Jehovah, conscientious observance of His laws, secures as their result rich harvests and commercial prosperity. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you," is the principle lying at the basis of all history. It is not, perhaps, too much to aver that the Bible is the only book in which physics all along are subordinated to ethics, and in which history is written in the light of the moral idea.

Looked upon thus the Deluge takes its place, I am tempted to say, naturally, in the orderly sequence of events. Given the awful wickedness described in the sixth chapter, and the overthrow of the world in one way or another is morally inevitable. "God saw that every imagination of a man's heart was only evil continually." Men's thoughts, from their first embryonic inception deep down in the mind to their outward consummation in act, were evil, and only evil continually. Conscience seems to have died out of the race. A continuance of this state of utter and universal godlessness, with only one pious family in the whole earth, was a moral impossibility. Further longsuffering would be but a premium on vice, violence, and unchastity. The destruction of the world was an absolute governmental necessity, arising not from physics, but from ethics; not from the operation of natural forces, but from the inexorable working of moral laws. Were there no distinct record of some such disaster as the Flood, the trained conscience would be more staggered by its absence than the enlightened intellect is by its presence. Granted a state of utter godlessness, of out-and-out corruption and cruelty and injustice—without restraints from within or checks from without, without fear of God or regard of man—and the destruction of the world becomes a moral certainty.

III. In the sixth chapter is drawn a moral portraiture of the world immediately before the Flood.

The line of Cain and the line of Seth are seen to coalesce and intermingle, and thereby the last rampart against ungodliness is swept away: "And it came to pass, that when men began to multiply on

the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose." Most extraordinary and fantastic explanations have been propounded by commentators. Only two need here be mentioned.

First, that by "sons of God" are intended angels, who fell in love with feminine beauty, and that therefore unholy intercourse between angels and women is taught. Among the ancients, Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Ambrose advocated this interpretation. Having been brought up in Paganism, their minds familiar from infancy with impure conceptions of illicit relations between the gods and women-kind, they were naturally captivated by this wild theory. Among modern theologians of repute, Stier, Nitzsch, Kurtz, and Delitzsch strenuously maintain it. This alone explains, they say, the statement made in ver. 4—"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men [*nephilim*] which were of old, men of renown." The natural order was subverted; demonic men, with the devil's fire in their blood, walked the earth; mankind were dehumanised. Hence the imperative necessity of bringing to a sudden end this diabolical breed, a cross between fallen angels and fallen women. What an awful depth of depravity is here opened to our view! The Deluge becomes a moral necessity.

The later Fathers, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret, Augustine, and Jerome, condemn that

view as monstrous and profane. It contradicts all our settled convictions in regard of the distinctions between spirit and matter, and shocks us by its antagonism to all natural correspondences. More valuable than scholarship is what St. Paul calls sobermindedness for the understanding of Holy Writ. The view, therefore, which commends itself to my judgment is the simple one, for which the preceding chapters have prepared us, that the sons of God were the descendants of Seth, and the daughters of men women in general, including every branch of the Adamite family, the posterity of all the "sons and daughters" of the first pair, with especial reference to the Cainite women. It was a period of the free intermingling of families. Professors of religion formed *mésalliances* with voluptuous women, lust overtopped all barriers, polygamy desecrated the Church, and with polygamy rushed in all unnameable impurities.

"The earth was corrupt before God," signifying that true worship had degenerated into profanity. "The earth was filled with violence," denoting the subversion of social order by anarchy and rapine. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth." No wonder, therefore, that "it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and that it grieved Him at His heart." But it is objected that God is immutable. Yes; and the immutability of His character is the reason for the vicissitudes in the method of His procedure towards men. Because He is unchangeable in His love and holiness, He varies His dispensations in accordance with the changed moral conditions of His

creatures. God created man in His image, after His likeness ; but now "all flesh has corrupted his way on the earth." The corruption is deep and universal. Amongst all the families of men, only one remained loyal to God, and in that family possibly only one man!—"Thee [Noah] have I seen righteous before Me in this generation" (vii. 1). What a terrible indictment of the world! "Write on the low brow—'the image and likeness of God'; write on the idiot's leering face—'the image and likeness of God'; write on the sensualist's porcine face—'the image and likeness of God'; write on the puppet's powdered and painted countenance—'the image and likeness of God'—do this, and then say how infinite is the mockery, how infinite the lie."¹

The Image of God! Oh, the irony of the situation! No wonder that "it repented the Lord that He had made man, and that it grieved Him at His heart, and that He said, I will destroy man." The wonder is that He suffered him so long. And, truth to tell, when I see these riotous, outrageous, lascivious men, it repents me too that God ever made them, and it grieves me at my heart. God made men in His image, after His likeness. God indeed! Say rather the devil made them. "Of your father, the devil, ye are; and the works of your father will ye do." "And God said, The end of all flesh is come before Me." The measure of their iniquity is full; sin in all its ramifications has worked itself out to its farthest limits; its cry, like the roar of the sea, "foaming out its own shame," has ascended to heaven; and God says, "I will destroy man from

¹ Dr. Parker, *The People's Bible*, vol. i., p. 112.

the face of the earth, even as a man wipeth a dish."

Before destruction came, God gave timely warning: "The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." When God says, "My Spirit," many exegetes, carried away by the idea that it is too early yet to speak of the Holy Ghost, dilute it into man's spirit, thus converting the Spirit of God into the spirit that is in man. However, we must not be hoodwinked by preconceived theories. If God says, "*My Spirit*," He does not mean *our* spirit. But when the ancients spoke of the Spirit of God, they did not conceive of Him as a personal hypostasis, any more than when they spoke of the spirit of man they conceived of it as an identity distinguishable from man.

Thus far God has not abandoned the human race, leaving it to rot in uncleanness. His Spirit was striving with man, invigorating the reason, quickening the conscience, contending with the corruption of his nature. But man's turpitude continued to increase, the Divine in him was growing feebler, the carnal waxing stronger. Only the smallest spark of the Divine Fire remained unextinguished amid the foul ashes of fleshly lusts. On that spark the Divine Spirit was blowing to fan it into a flame; but, instead of brightening, it was dying, till the last vestige of divinity was on the verge of extinction, and man was becoming flesh, all flesh, and nothing but flesh. But before withdrawing the restraining influences of His Spirit, God made one great final effort. He commissioned Noah to preach the im-

pending judgment, and doubtless his ministry was accompanied by the influences of the Holy Ghost. The venerable patriarch did his work faithfully and well. He rebuked the dread apostasy of the Church in his own genealogical line, denounced the dire ungodliness and defiant presumption in the line of Cain. He prophesied to them of the coming Flood, besought them to return to God, if haply they might find Him. What response did he get? "He seemed to them as one that mocked," they laughed outright at the amiable fanatic, ridiculed his warnings, disregarded his exhortations. They went on "eating and drinking, building and planting, marrying and giving in marriage." Then he began the building of the ark. For one hundred and twenty years he laboured at that huge ship in shape like a chest, with a carrying capacity of eighty-one thousand tons, second in size only to the *Great Eastern*. His patrimony was doubtless expended in the purchase of materials and the payment of shipwrights. Backed only by the faith of that one man, the axes and hammers went all those weary years. He was put down as a maniac; his unwieldy wooden structure was deemed an immense joke; men came from afar to see the old preacher and his tub! The laughter of the antediluvian world at Noah and his ark was long, loud, and boisterous. "The longsuffering of God waited in the time of Noah while the ark was a-preparing." The Divine admonitions served no purpose, men dehumanised themselves, became wild beasts, making even their reason subserve their passions.

Lo, the Flood came: "The foundations of the

great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." Vain are all attempts to explain this on naturalistic principles. But what about the laws of Nature, the staple of modern science? Rather ask, What about the laws of God? Here it is the laws of God which are in operation, and the laws of God can always make the laws of Nature bend to answer their own purposes. The Deluge, as previously stated, must be viewed, not in the light of the laws of Nature, but in the light of the laws of God. Primarily it is a supernatural event in the moral government of the world, taking its place among miracles, inexplicable save in the light of the Divine Power and Purpose.

God's purpose of having a godly seed, a large multitude which no man can number, shall not be frustrated by human defection. The Deluge was a necessity, not only to satisfy the demands of Justice, but also to enable Mercy to attain its high and noble aims. God drowned the race only when it had arrived at a stage of incorrigibleness in evil, past all the ameliorating influences at His disposal. Noah, however,—“among the faithless, faithful only he,”—found favour with God; and through him God resolved to continue the race till its salvation should be perfectly wrought out. The Deluge thus became a necessary step in the salvation of the world, a link in the history of redemption: “The ark, wherein a few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (1 Pet. iii. 20). From water? No; by water. They were saved in the ark, but by water. The world perished by water; the Church was saved by the very means which overthrew the world. Had God allowed the

ungodliness of the antediluvians to continue another century, the last remnant of true religion would have been obliterated, the Church annihilated, the purpose of God respecting a godly seed frustrated. How to preserve the race, and yet realise the purposes of Divine Grace? Only by drowning the ungodly to make a fresh start with Noah. This lamentable calamity has, therefore, a salvation side as well as a destruction side. At the critical moment, "in due time," when Evil was submerging Good, when the seed of the serpent was overcoming the seed of the woman—had overcome all except one family, and possibly all except one in that family—God supernaturally interposed. Having drowned the unbelievers, the arena is once more clear for Him to proceed, in a new and a clean world, with the work of Redemption. At the last moment, Evil was discomfited, Goodness triumphed.

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